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# THE PACIFIC SPECTATOR

*A Journal of Interpretation*



VOLUME FIVE

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**B**ETWEEN the writing of this editorial (December 20) and its appearance in print, the course of United States history may well have been determined for the next hundred years or for many hundreds. Decisions may have been reached, actions initiated which place America on a one-way road. Where that road might lead none of us now can see or foresee. About it, however, one fact is clear: its construction and its placing will be the result of responsibilities shared in a fashion new to any world-scale planning of the last several thousand years.

During those years, men with white skins have stood at the apex of the human pyramid. The combinations and recombinations among countries which held the world in uneasy balance were of their making. Europe first, then Europe plus North America—the two have dominated all recent history.

To the dimmest eyes it is clear that their domination, if continuing at all, must now continue on an altered basis. Yellow hands, brown hands, black ones are reaching for power. How the demand they make is to be met, on what terms, with what increase or diminishing of good will among peoples is a question ultimately important everywhere but of instant importance to the Pacific Coast, nearest rich neighbor to the hugest of nonwhite aggregations. The Pacific Spectator has dealt with some phase of this many-sided question in nearly every issue. Because the question grows more pressing hourly, the time for answering shorter, it uses its editorial page this time to center attention on two articles in the present issue, the one by Robert North, traveler and Asian scholar, offering a possible solution which is in no sense a panacea; the other by Wallace Stegner, showing how, through the action of individual citizens, oftener than not unofficial, "Uncle Shylock," in at least one small country, is being transformed into the beneficent uncle.

*Edith R. Munniceles*

# THE PACIFIC

A JOURNAL OF

WINTER

VOLUME V

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# ASIAN VIOLENCE

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*by Robert Carver North*

MY RECENT TRIP through the fringe of Asia from Pakistan to Japan was a hasty one—the sort that quite understandably causes old hands to wince, discrediting every word one says before one says it. Yet from this painfully inadequate series of three- and four-night stands in cities like Calcutta, Rangoon, Singapore, Hanoi, and Manila I have carried away a single overbearing impression which the oldest, most critical Asia hand, I think, would probably share. This impression is one of violence, present or impending, which leaves one frightened for the future of a cold-war world.

Except for one factor, I might accept this violence as a nearly welcome omen, as an indication, long overdue, that Asia is waking up, shaking off Western political and economic bonds, stumbling into motion on its own unsteady feet. But this same violence is an ominous thing because of the harness which world Communist leaders intend to buckle on the people of Asia, because of the direction in which world Communist leaders intend to drive them.

Calcutta's violence was more impending than present. We were on our way home, the Canadian and I, after serving as delegates to the Institute of Pacific Relations Conference held in Lucknow during the first weeks of October 1950. There we had heard the United States denounced, especially by the Indian delegation, as an economic threat to the independence and well-being of Asia. But the Conference had come to an end, and now, about ten o'clock at night, we were leaving the splendourous dining room of Calcutta's Great Eastern Hotel.

During dinner there had been five or six liveried and turbaned table bearers hovering over each of us; bright lights from overhead chandeliers made silver and glassware sparkle; a nine-piece orchestra played waltzes and tangos, and a Eurasian crooner crooned. It was from this brilliance that we stepped out into the hot, black night. In less than a block we found ourselves stumbling over human



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bodies sleeping nearly naked on the sidewalk. We walked four blocks, counting, but gave up near the thousand mark. Swollen with humanity recently displaced by partition, the city has little to offer the destitute but pavements where they must sleep as best they can, trampled over by equally hungry sacred cows. "If these people ever rise up," the Canadian whispered, "if they ever find the strength to seize what human beings deserve . . ."

Rangoon was different. Burma has quantities of rice, and as a Burmese put it, the poverty there is relatively opulent. But the violence is real. Just before our arrival, delta-land guerrillas fired on an airliner, as it came in low near Rangoon airport, and wounded a passenger. An English resident of Rangoon called the air service to Mandalay "an airlift." Burmese were more restrained, but nearly everyone admitted that it was not safe to travel most country roads except in armed convoy. The government, which considers itself socialist, is gradually strengthening and expanding its control, and observers consider the situation much more stable than it was a year ago. But if Ho Chi-Min should win in Indochina . . .

In Singapore we were sleeping in another luxurious hotel when, just before midnight, we were awakened by the thud of exploding bombs—RAF bombs smashing into Communist guerrilla concentrations on the Malay Peninsula not fifteen miles away. And the next morning, more "bandits" burned a bus in the streets of Singapore. Something of the sort—a hand grenade tossed into a restaurant, a policeman killed for his pistol—happens almost every day.

A week later, in Hanoï, I was guest at the house of the Dean of the University. Just after midnight the surrounding residential section blazed red with rifle and machine-gun fire. Mortars coughed, and then we heard the carumph! of exploding shells.

From Manila I rode with a friend in his jeep. We were rounding a traffic circle in the direction of Cavite when suddenly we found ourselves in the middle of a Philippine battalion deployed for skir-

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mish. We drove a few hundred yards farther. There was a peculiar hush over the area, something both of us had known well during the last Pacific war. My friend wheeled his jeep around in the middle of the road. "Let's get out of here," he said. The trouble? Huks, we read in the next day's paper.

Violence. By this time it had impressed itself upon me as the most critical superficial phenomenon in Asia today.

What are the causes of all this unrest? The factors vary from country to country. Here it is an obsolete and unjust system of land tenantry; there it is fear of Western imperialism; elsewhere it is overpopulation or extremes of wealth and poverty. Graft in government, irregular distribution of natural resources, appalling illiteracy—these are the factors in one place or another. Each area has its peculiar problems; each area demands special study. But all these phenomena added together result in an Asia that twists and writhes in violence.

And what do world Communist leaders intend to do with the dynamic of all this violence? The answer is not difficult to find, for Communist theoreticians and planners have been setting it down again and again over the last thirty years, and recent developments suggest that they mean exactly what they have written.

Most of us remember that Karl Marx saw an inevitable struggle in capitalist countries leading to revolution, the overthrow of capitalism, and rule by a dictatorship of the proletariat.

Leninists added to this theory, maintaining that capitalists in industrially advanced states suck needed strength from semicolonial areas, including many sections of Asia, and thus prolong a doomed existence. Liberate the exploited from the exploiters, Leninists advised; separate such states as Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and the United States from imperialist access to raw materials and markets of industrially backward areas—do this, and capitalism will quickly fall.

But the imperialists cannot be expelled from semicolonial areas by proletarian revolution, Communist leaders said, for such regions have not yet developed a large *bourgeoisie* or a numerous and sophisticated proletariat.

Soviet policy, therefore, was twofold:

1. To exploit existing contradictions among various capitalist powers. If the imperialist powers go to war with one another, Lenin said, so much the better for us. When thieves fight, an honest man wins. This became a standing Soviet foreign policy.
2. To promote existing revolutions in semicolonial areas of Asia by supporting whatever middle-class, nationalist force is willing to fight for the expulsion of foreign imperialism.

Leninists did not intend this alliance with Asia nationalists to be in any sense a merger, or even an endorsement of native nationalist objectives, but only a temporary tactic against imperialism and a means of reaching the submerged proletariat and peasantry.

Throughout the period of co-operation, local Communist leaders were expected to make powerful efforts toward arousing and organizing mass action among peasantry and city workers. For with guidance from the USSR and from Communist parties in economically more advanced countries, the masses in economically backward areas, struggling through phase after phase of class conflict, could attain Bolshevik socialism and eventually communism without suffering the pains of full capitalist development.

This guiding of the masses, according to Lenin, could best be achieved by a kind of dual action, by a policy of co-operation combined with opposition. Thus, it was imperative for local Communists to participate in the institutions of their enemies (and in institutions of their temporary allies), in their trade unions, their elections, and their assemblies.

The theory behind this was that while middle-class institutions look reactionary and decadent to a trained revolutionary, they remain acceptable to the masses which he must influence.

Thus a trade union (or a political party) could serve to bring the Communist in touch with the people he later intended to lead; elections could put into office influential middle-class leaders who, because they *were* middle class, would, according to the Communists, eventually betray the workers and peasants; and a parlia-

## ASIAN VIOLENCE IN A COLD-WAR WORLD

mentary assembly was, to Lenin, a tribunal for proving that bourgeois democracy is actually obsolete.

For Lenin fully expected his bourgeois opponents in these bodies to discredit themselves before the eyes of the workers and peasants, while every Communist leader, on the other hand, would prove that his interests were identical with those of the working masses.

In line with this principle, local Communist parties were expected to issue instructions, directions, slogans, and warnings in order that the masses might learn *from their own experience* that these instructions, directions, and warnings were in their interest and therefore correct.

To apply this manual of tactics in semicolonial and colonial areas of Asia, Bolshevik leaders needed a situation which was already ripe for revolt. For Lenin denied that Communists could "make" revolutions.

The ruling classes must be so corrupt or so weakened by war that they could not maintain themselves in the old way. And the lower classes must be ready to sacrifice their lives rather than tolerate things as they were. Only when these two conditions existed, Lenin said, could local Communist parties, the "vanguard" of the masses, lead the lower classes against their oppressors.

To us, these theories may sound like empty doctrine. Yet the truth is that they cannot be so lightly dismissed. At the Lucknow Conference it was clear that numbers of non-Communist Asians were more immediately afraid of what they called American economic imperialism than they were of Soviet expansion and much more fearful of the French in Viet Nam than of communism in Russia or China. There was also a feeling among many non-Communist Asians that whereas in past decades Western capitalism had subjected Asia to human indignities and foreign economic and political exploitation, Soviet Russia, by "pulling itself up by its own bootstraps," had set an example which other underdeveloped nations could not afford to ignore.

What such non-Communist Asians do not realize is that to Communist strategists in Soviet Russia the bulk of non-Communist Asia is not merely an industrially backward area struggling for eco-



nomic, social, and political development, but also a vast battleground where Russia, with support from victorious communism in China, can exploit present antagonisms and change the course of history in the direction of a Soviet world.

As early as 1926 the Soviet leader Manuilsky spoke of a coming Pacific war in which the United States and Great Britain would eventually defeat Japan in a struggle for the raw materials and markets of Asia. After this great Pacific war, he said, the struggle would then change its face, turning into a vast liberation movement of Asian countries oppressed by world imperialism.

Liberated China, Manuilsky said, would then become a magnet for all the peoples of the yellow race who inhabit the Philippines, Indonesia, and the numerous islands of the Pacific. China would then become a major power in the Pacific, a menacing threat to the capitalist world of three continents. China, he said, would fulfill this task among the peoples of the Philippines, Indonesia, and the islands of the Pacific by harnessing the dynamic of local unrest, by exploiting local hatred against foreign imperialism.

Nearly twenty-five years have passed since Manuilsky made these predictions. The process was much slower than he foresaw. Yet today, in 1951, Soviet leaders see Communist China fulfilling this very function, drawing the revolutionary movements of Asia like a magnet, menacing the capitalist world of three continents.

Following the great Pacific war foreseen by Kremlin leaders, Chinese Communists had an easier time than even Moscow had suspected. China seethed with peasant revolt. Nationalism ran high. Vast numbers of Chinese were willing to fight rather than live in the old way. And Chiang Kai-shek's government, through ineptitude and graft, fitted admirably the doctrinaire niche reserved by Communist theory for rulers so corrupt that they cannot maintain themselves in the old way.

Meanwhile in Korea a dangerous situation had developed. With the fall of Japan in 1945, Russian troops had pushed into northern Korea. These, in turn, were met by American troops proceeding from the south, and the thirty-eighth parallel became the dividing line.

## ASIAN VIOLENCE IN A COLD-WAR WORLD

In this new sphere, the Soviet Union, ignoring or defying the United Nations at nearly every turn, used the same old tactics of exploiting existing antagonisms and of harnessing local unrest. By 1950 the Russians had in North Korea a spirited, well-trained, native army prepared to carry out revolution combined with aggression. And when United Nations forces pushed this army back, Chinese Communist troops crossed into Korea, widening the conflict.

Yet Korea is only one part of the picture. An editorial in the Cominform newspaper analyzed the larger Asian situation early in 1950. An outstanding feature of the present world scene, the editorial stated, is the unprecedented scope of the revolutionary struggle of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries throughout much of Asia.

In many countries, the editorial said, the struggle is already of an armed nature, with hundreds of millions of working people of the East taking part, and the scale and nature of the struggle indicate that the people of the colonial and semicolonial countries have "resolutely taken the path of revolution against colonial slavery and for national liberation."

The mighty advance of the postwar revolutionary liberation struggle in the colonial and semicolonial countries, the editorial said, has shaken the entire system of world imperialism to its very foundations and shows [the wording is straight out of Lenin] that *the colonial peoples refuse to live any longer in the old way and the ruling classes in the metropolitan countries are unable any longer to rule them in the old way.*

In this struggle today—even as Manuilsky pointed out in 1926—the victory of the Communists in China has been of key importance. "The experience of the victorious national-liberation struggle of the Chinese people," according to the Cominform, "teaches that the working class in colonial and semicolonial areas must unite [and this again is pure Lenin] with all parties, classes, groups and organizations willing to fight the imperialists and their hirelings and to form a broad, nation-wide united front, headed by the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party, the party equipped with the theory of Marxist-Leninism, the party that breathes the

spirit of revolutionary irreconcilability to the enemies of the people . . .”

The Cominform article singled out each area for special comment: India, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, Viet Nam, China, the Philippines, South Korea—all along the crescent-shaped front from Iran to Japan.

A Chinese Communist leader was even more specific concerning imminent tactics in Asia: “It is necessary to set up wherever and whenever possible a national army which is led by the Communist Party . . . Armed struggle is the main form of struggle for the national liberation struggles of many colonies and semi-colonies.”

A large part of Asia, Communist leaders boast, is already aflame. And however much you and I detest communism, we can scarcely deny the truth of this. What are the sparks that set these fields afire? What gives these people this dreadful will to fight? The Russians offer two answers: (1) hatred for foreign imperialism; (2) a willingness to die rather than live under conditions as they are.

Indigenous unrest, Stalinist inspiration and training, dogged patience and devotion to the cause—these were the critical and dangerous ingredients for Communist success in China. These, rather than Russian tanks, have been the critical and dangerous potentialities in Korea. These are the fundamental factors in other parts of Asia.

The United Nations was by its very nature compelled to oppose aggression in Korea. But we must not confuse this aggression with local, homegrown unrest in Asia. For the United States and its allies can push back Russian tanks and still lose the battle of ideas in Asia. By supporting leaders whose followings are small and select, by supporting leaders whose ideas are obsolete and hated, by lending force to institutions that do not deserve to survive, by doing these things, the United States and its allies can lend credence to instructions, directions, and warnings which the Kremlin has spread about. By doing these things the United States and its allies can help the Kremlin in its attempt to convince Asia that Lenin and Stalin were correct.

## ASIAN VIOLENCE IN A COLD-WAR WORLD

What, then, *can* the United States and its allies do in regard to Asia?

The question is not an easy one to answer. For no matter what the Western world does, it will find many Asians suspicious and even hostile. Several Asian delegates made this painfully clear at Lucknow. If the West gives aid, it will be feared for its imperialism; if it withholds aid, it will be denounced for its indifference. If it establishes garrisons, it will be attacked as expansionist; if it keeps its troops at home, it will be written off as impotent and unable to keep its commitments. If it expresses no political preferences (or relies solely on military might), it will be accused of siding with reaction and the status quo; if it supports progressive forces, it will be condemned for intervention.

In other words, we are damned if we do and damned if we don't.

Yet it seems to me that this does not in any sense absolve the Western world from acting. Rather, it places upon us the responsibility of making doubly certain that our policies square with our own demands of conscience. It places upon us the responsibility of making doubly certain that our policies can stand judgment before the future.

Material aid to various parts of Asia represents a fundamental minimum. But it seems to me that in Asia we have strong evidence that ideas can be more powerful than things, that Western material aid, though vital, is not sufficient by itself to block Soviet ideas. In short, it seems to me that ideas can best be stopped by better ideas. We must find ideas to solve the problems of Asia.

For if revolution in Asia is basically an indigenous process, if Communists in China and elsewhere, benefiting by mistakes of past regimes and from the practices and policies of Western powers, are satisfying or promising to satisfy elementary human yearnings, if two or three Leninist ideas can sweep Asia like a prairie fire, then we ourselves are on trial, together with the democracy which we claim to represent.

It seems to me that the United States has in its own democratic heritage a concept that is revolutionary in the truest, most just, most peaceful sense. This is the democratic process.



## ROBERT CARVER NORTH

By the democratic process I mean government by the freely expressed will of the majority *plus* the recognition of certain inalienable human rights which the majority may not disturb, such rights as freedom of speech and press and thought, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and protection from abuses of power. In comparison with this concept, Soviet Russian principles of opportunism and double-dealing are undemocratic, nonprogressive, and counter-revolutionary.

In so far as the United States has blocked legitimate progress in various parts of the world, it has been because we ourselves—in contrast to our own *revolutionary democratic* origins—have limited or ignored the democratic process.

I believe it is not too late for the United States to assert its *revolutionary democratic leadership* in the world. As a first step, the United States must, in my opinion, proclaim (in clearer terms than it has so far) the right of all Asians to the same basic liberty Americans have demanded for themselves—the right to select and to alter their form of government in an atmosphere where basic freedoms (or their closest possible Asian equivalents) are observed. Many of those who know Asia best will say that these concepts, being foreign to Asian thought, cannot be translated into Asian terms. My answer is that Russian Communists have found astonishingly effective methods of translating Bolshevik doctrine into Asian terms; I like to think that with ingenuity and effort, we can do as well.

Beyond this, I believe that the United States must try to raise crucial Asian problems from unilateral to United Nations levels. Our government, for example, should urge a greater use of United Nations Commissions, manned largely by Asians, for dealing with each point of conflict. The purpose of these Commissions should be to make recommendations toward the settlement of existing problems and to propose the manner and the time for the peoples of these areas to make their wishes known. Furthermore, while seeking to transfer the bulk of its own unilateral actions to United Nations levels, the United States should urge other Western nations to do the same. Particularly, the United States should urge France to

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publish a timetable for Indochinese independence, registering that timetable with the United Nations for all Asia to see.

Finally, the United States should proclaim the right of all people to the opportunity for economic and social self-betterment—the opportunity to raise their national standard of living without impairing basic human rights of the individual. The United States should take the lead in proposing to the United Nations (and in supporting with American technical assistance and material aid) a more comprehensive series of long-range plans for the advancement of the underdeveloped regions of the world.

The immediate aim would be to present a vivid picture of what the United Nations can accomplish in terms of irrigation, flood control, tractors, roads, schools, hospitals, electrification, and other material advantages that are necessary if democracy is to take root and flourish in Asia.

*Revolutionary democratic inspiration and leadership*, a maximum support of and reliance on United Nations organs and machinery, maximum American grants of material aid to be channeled through the United Nations—these, I believe, are our only chance for answering communism in peaceful, lasting terms.

## Night Broadcast

CANDACE THURBER STEVENSON

*"You must harden yourselves," it said,  
"To a life of fear,  
To the plane-dropped death in bed  
Or afoot at noon. It is here.  
And you shall be fed  
On the lethal, surcharged air."*  
But it did not say:  
*"Prepare your soul to live!"*  
As it would in an earlier day.  
*"There can be no place to hide  
In a crashing universe  
Where the morning stars collide,  
Hurling a flaming curse."*  
The voice from the box kept on  
Brandishing clean-cut words  
Like javelins sent to shatter  
Composure in splintered shards.  
But it did not say: *"What matter?  
To die is the common lot.  
What of it if it comes  
In a blast of hate from the sky,  
Like a circus roll of drums!  
What you have been will survive."*  
It was this that it did not say.  
Even the voice from the box  
Dodges the veiled cliché.  
The words pelt on like rain  
Beating the bitter ground  
Of the grim, resistant brain  
With an urgency of sound.

# POETRY AND THE LAY READER

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by Joseph B. Harrison

FOR A GOOD MANY years now I have been a member of a pretty highbrow group—anyhow, it's a faculty group drawn from all over a campus—who meet once a month during the academic year and read papers to each other. And I have noticed that whenever a member proposes to present a paper entitled "Something About Beetles" everybody looks solemn and says "Ah, yes—beetles!" And when another offers as his subject "Something About Battles" everybody looks still more solemn and says "Ah, yes—battles!" But when a third admits he is going to do Something about Poetry everybody immediately begins to make wisecracks about the birds and the flowers and the lovers and all those pretty but mindless things that bloom and sing in the spring, *tra la*.

I suppose it's an example of what Bernard Shaw said: "The poetic temperament's a very nice temperament—very nice and poetic, I dare say. But it's an old maid's temperament." The poets, Shaw went on to declare, always live in bachelor lodgings and are adored by their landladies and never get married. Indeed, in his *Back to Methuselah*, Shaw finally put poetry in its place by describing man, who will ultimately be born from the egg like the birds and will break the shell at the stage he now attains at the age eighteen, as spending the years between eighteen and twenty-one amusing himself as children do with childish things—with poetry and sundry such arts—which he is thereafter ready to put away with his other toys while he turns to some rather vague higher seriousness.

At any rate, no matter how solemn a poetry reader may himself be, he can always provoke amusement among persons whose solemnities are other than his own by mentioning poetry.

Perhaps nobody reads poetry nowadays except poets themselves, or students in classes, or teachers of literature who have to read it for their courses, or some few other queer and unfortunate people. One reason for this is that we are all very busy, and poetry doesn't



get us anywhere, practically speaking; as a matter of fact, it holds us back. The way to get across the street at a crowded intersection is to concentrate on the signals and then step out smartly at the green light; whoever stops halfway to absorb the full sensuous content of the experience, to look for the light that never was on sea or land, to bend his ear to the still, sad music of humanity, is not likely to live to write a poem, or to read one, either. No, it doesn't pay to read poetry. And another thing—it's hard work. Oh, I don't mean that it's hard to read Eddie Guest's poem to Calvin Coolidge's mother: "Did God ever let her see / Little Calvin's destiny? / Did God tell her e'er she went / He would be a President?"—honestly, it goes something like that! But real poetry is more often than not hard to read. It is condensed, figurative, symbolic, implicative expression. Not much of it can be read rapidly, or quite understood at a first reading—if at a last. And hardly anyone will make the sacrifice of spending the time on one page of poetry that might suffice for two or five or ten pages of prose. It is true, of course, that people will sometimes read slow, hard prose, about such things as schizophrenia or nuclear fission; but that's science, and no one has to apologize for slowing down to understand science.

One of the slow things about reading poetry (as about appreciating the other arts) is the grasping of the relationship between content and form. The content is the form, the form is the content, and neither is completely itself except inasmuch as it is the other. When Pope proposed that poets should utter "what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed" he was guilty of a fallacy; for the expression is the thought, and in so far as it is better than "what oft was thought" it is different from what oft was thought.

Let us presume, for instance, that I am a poet and that I want to write a poem about a cow, pointing out that she is a bovine creature that moos and gives milk. For practical purposes there is really no need for me to say more unless I mean more—she moos, she gives milk. But if I am a poet I do mean more, and if as poet I am Ogden Nash, I come out with this:

The cow is of the bovine ilk,  
One end is moo, the other milk.

## POETRY AND THE LAY READER

I am, of course, saying what the practical man would say, but I am also saying a lot more. I am saying, perhaps, that the creature of God which we have turned into a milk machine is slightly sublime and slightly ridiculous—and so are we. But it is possible that I may be saying something else, and it is this very indefiniteness that makes poetry so exasperating to practical people.

You will see, at any rate, what I mean about poetry slowing you up, and how form is largely responsible for that.

All this is particularly true, I think, in periods of transition, of rapid change. For then we have not only the difficulty that inheres in form itself but added thereto the difficulty of *new* form. Everyone has by now heard about the psychologist's advice to young song writers who want to make the "Hit Parade"—that they should produce some slight variation of the old and familiar rather than something new and strange. For the producers of the new and strange are generally damned rather than paid for their pains. Later generations may lay some wreaths, but not until the new and strange has become the familiar.

Take, as a classic example, what the Scotch reviewers did to Wordsworth and Keats, who dared to write like Wordsworth and Keats rather than like Pope and Johnson. "The case of Wordsworth," wrote Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*, "is now manifestly hopeless; and we give him up as altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism. We cannot indeed altogether omit taking precautions now and then against the spreading of the malady; but for himself, though we shall watch the progress of his symptoms as a matter of professional curiosity and instruction, we really think it right not to harass him any longer with nauseous remedies . . ." And of Keats, John Croker wrote in the *Quarterly Review*, "he is unhappily a disciple of the new school of what has been somewhere called Cockney poetry, which may be defined to consist of the most incongruous ideas in the most uncouth language." What particularly enrages the latter reviewer is the unintelligibility, amounting almost to madness, of such lines by Keats as these from *Endymion*:

Such the sun, the moon  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon

## JOSEPH B. HARRISON

For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in; and clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms . . .

Now whatever we may think of these lines today—and I confess I retain a weakness for them—we do not find them unintelligible to the point of insanity. The warning to all of us, not to console ourselves for our laziness or our ossification by calling all new things crazy, is obvious. All we need do, to become dubious about taking that way out, is to recall the parade through the past of the blasphemous, the subversive, the mad: Socrates, Euripides, Jesus, Thomas a Kempis, Galileo, Luther, el Greco, Goethe, Hugo, Wagner, Darwin, Ibsen, Cezanne, Zola, Stravinsky—all mad as hatters, and enemies of God, men, and the State.

Though doubtless each of us is able to recognize that our ancestors would have been smarter if they had been more tolerant of new things, we are at the same moment likely to say: "But of course the new things they rejected were really true, beautiful, and good; whereas the new things we reject are outrageous, wicked, and dumb. *Their* objection to Keats was plain silly; but *our* objection to James Joyce is righteous indignation."

Well, at any rate, I think we should not permit ourselves to get indignant or funny at the expense of the moderns without having soberly surveyed these risks. And having said so much, one must admit that the temptation to get indignant or funny at the expense of the moderns is sometimes well-nigh overwhelming. It's often justified, too; just as certain of the contemporaries of Wordsworth and Keats were absurd (and occasionally Wordsworth and Keats themselves, for that matter) so are many of our contemporaries absurd. That's the devil of it: nobody can tell us for sure which is which—which the genius, which the nut. No wonder we get sore. "A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose." Or is it? At any rate, the phrase made Gertrude Stein famous, and made a lot of us comfortable in the assurance that so much at least is nutty. Or are *we* nutty?

Take Max Eastman, in his *The Literary Mind*, having fun with

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some modern writers and their eulogistic critics under such chapter titles as "The Cult of Unintelligibility" and "Poets Talking to Themselves." Eastman, with the aid of Mark Van Doren, Allen Tate, and T. S. Eliot, has been trying to read some modern poetry. Van Doren has told him that poets need deal not with ideas that take shape only on the surface of thought, but rather with "the intellectual lava that flows, sluggishly, irresistibly somewhere down below." Tate has told him that "poetical meaning is a direct intuition, realized prior to an explicit knowledge of the subject-matter of the poem." And Eliot has told him that the "reader has to allow the images to fall into his memory successively, without questioning the reasonableness of each at the moment; so that at the end a total effect is produced." Eastman concludes from this triple tutelage that "it is awfully easy to read poetry—all you have to do is suspend your intelligence and let her go." He then goes on to have some more fun with the suggestion of C. K. Ogden that though it is difficult to read James Joyce it is still more difficult to read Eskimo, and that a good approach to Joyce would therefore be by way of the Arctic Circle.

All this is, of course, good clean fun. I am tempted to have a fling at it myself. I fall to the temptation and submit the following poem, my own, for analysis:

### A SPADE IS A SPADE

A whale has spouted in the middle of the Pacific;  
Hot afternoons have been in Montana;  
Bricks!

Readers of modern poetry will probably recognize that the second line is lifted from somebody else's poem but will grant that the lifting is in accord with a practice well established by Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. All readers will recognize that in driving home my point that a spade is a spade I do not crudely and obviously repeat the idea of the title. First I say that a whale has spouted in the middle of the Pacific. If you ask me for the bearing of this on the subject, I look at you pityingly and remark, "Hot afternoons have been in Montana." If you are still at a loss, I leave you forthwith, muttering hopelessly in my throat, "Bricks!" It is not for me to explain that although whales have no spades they do have spouts and that the



spadiest spade is no more spadey than a spout is spouty; or that hot afternoons are blunter facts than the bluntest spade, in Montana; or that a nakedly unsyntaxed brick has a foursquare reality much more expressive than that of any garden implement which may have survived into our industrial era.

But this sort of thing is much too easy. Mr. Eastman and I have been indulging our vexation at having to spend time and work hard at reading our contemporaries in poetry. There are plenty of reasons, and good ones, for the so-called "modernist" poetry. It is too simple to say that while modern poetry is poetry written in our time, "modernist" poetry is poetry written in our time that nobody can understand. What was difficult in Keats has, most of it, by now become quite clear; what has been difficult in Hart Crane or Eliot is daily—as it grows more familiar—becoming more comprehensible. And one now knows enough of what is meant by "the stream of consciousness," so closely related to modern poetry or to poetry altogether, for that matter, that one tries one's own hand at that, too, occasionally. One day during the late war, for example, being uninterrupted for an hour in my office, I attempted a parody.

It seems that what goes on in my consciousness or yours, in its various zones or levels, is a complex of responses to the stimuli that at all moments are pouring in upon our receivers. We hear things, we see things; we smell them, we touch them. And all sorts of associations are summoned up out of the wreckage of our memories. At the expense of absurd oversimplification, however, let us for the moment concern ourselves only with things seen and heard, and to an arbitrary maximum of four stimuli for each sense. What, as I sit here at the desk in my office, do I see? Well, I see a broken-backed dictionary on the seminar table; I see the blackboard at the far end of the room; I see the thermostat as it catches the light on the wall; I see a bit of the quartz called "fool's gold" (brought to me by a student from Mark Twain's Jackass Hill) which I use as a paperweight on my desk. And what do I hear? I hear the hum of distant machinery; I hear the murmur of a distant voice; I hear a door closing down the hall; I hear on the floor overhead the shuffling feet of a class getting early dismissal.

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And what are some of the associations, dim or bright, in focus or on margin, on the surface or at a lower level of my consciousness? (Some of these will be obvious; but some, I warn you, will not, and no stream-of-consciousness writer should explain.)

For things seen:

*Dictionary*: binding broken—old, old—inherited from V. L. Parrington—never knew this building would be named for him—rolling over in his grave—the graveyard poets—Harvard Yard—you can tell a man from Harvard but you can't tell him much.

*Blackboard*: janitor's washed it—washed away all sin—the old hypocrite—aren't we all—just pretending—fifth column—Japs in Yakima—apples—what's worse than finding a worm in your apple?

*Thermostat*: turned it up—janitor will catch me if I don't watch out—coal shortage—warm in the afternoon but I'm not here then—is warmth warmth when nobody's there to feel it?—Bishop Berkeley—clerk—Cholmondeley—Mips!—so this is London—"Are you there?"—new dials on Kenwood.

*Fool's gold*: Mark Twain—death slightly exaggerated—death in the afternoon—lost generation—Lost! Lost! Lost!—Tom Wolfe—Inglewood—bottleneck—60,000 airplanes.

For things heard:

*Hum of machinery*: Ho, hum!—nerts!—applesauce!—aplets—Cashmere—Vale of Cashmere—Cashmere shawls—Cashmere Bouquet—cash register—no sale—Stephen Crane—the universe.

*Voice*: one voice, two voices—"Nobody marks you"—Shakespeare—the time is out of joint—I'll say it is!—what do?—nothing, nothing, and again nothing—the dice of drowned men's bones—Max Eastman.

*Door*: click, click—Studebaker—24 m.p.g.—show me—Pike County Ballads—Hay-Pauncefoote—hayfoot strawfoot—Dear Dim Days Beyond Recall—Silver Threads Among the Gold—Yip I Addy I Aye.

*Shuffle overhead*: early—Sophus is fudging—sugar shortage—alliteration—silken sad uncertain curtain—curtain, certain, certain, curtain—fudge, fudge, fudge-fudge-fudge!

And now for a stream-of-consciousness paragraph wrought out of these materials:

Parrington got caught in the shuffle and pulled the covers off of Shakespeare I'll say the time is out of joint! The Japs were singing Yip I Addy I Aye and shuffling in Harvard Yard but Studebaker was driving through the

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Vale of Cashmere in spite of the sugar shortage with twenty-four miles clicking on the cash register. Are you there, Mark Twain? Shuffle over in your grave but it's as cold here as there but you won't be rolling over anyhow because nobody marks you. Nothing, nothing, and again nothing. The dice of drowned men's bones were lost, lost, lost Tom Wolfe dropped them sadly uncertainly on Sophus from 60,000 airplanes Sophus had shuffled off to Yakima that worm in his apple the old hypocrite. Hayfoot, Pauncefoote, strawfoot was what shuffled shuffled shuffled in the dear dim days beyond recall.

### And an interpretation:

The time is out of joint: everything is undisciplined, the enemy invades the citadels of learning, classes break up in the middle of the hour, heating systems fail to work, apples go bad, great men die or turn over in their graves, nobody pays any attention to anybody else—in short, the world at war is, as the Joxer put it in O'Casey's play, "in a state of shassis."

Now the point of all this is to indicate—in a juvenile way, I admit—something of the much more subtle state of mind upon which a modern poet, as well as James Joyce, draws when he seeks to give a literary representation of man's subjective processes. Not that there is anything new about the state of mind—the newness is rather in man's awareness of it and his conscious exploration of it. Coleridge, for example, was deep in the stream of consciousness when he wrote:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree  
Where Alph the sacred river ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.

### And so was Lewis Carroll with:

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

After such exercises we should be at least partially prepared for Gertrude Stein's "Mildred's Thoughts":

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Pigeons cooing only open cards and cases.  
And when does grain yellow and the vegetables.  
How horribly we crowned the evergreens. We always used to  
say that we lived in an aquarium. And now how silently the sun  
shines with a warm wind and cherished water . . .

But this, someone says, is pure nonsense. No doubt. It is meant to be such. Gertrude Stein is seeing what she can get by blanking out her logical processes and letting her associations rip under no more confines than that of an intuitive rhythm. Try it yourself. I do so as I write and get the following bits in three tries:

I was there incommunicado which is all I ask from the  
twelve days of Christmas.

Give me the answer O my soul for in the course of human  
events nothing is more beautiful than rain.

When he came he was met in the antrim by the foxes of  
the purple shade.

This sort of thing is close below the surface in the minds of all of us, though much more richly and complexly in the minds of poets. A good poet is, I presume, always refreshing his conscious and conventional thoughts by letting them dip into this undertow where they pick up associations, many of which have to be rejected but from some of which he derives the images and symbols that lift his utterance toward the sublime, out of the commonplace on the one hand and the ridiculous on the other.

I think I am talking about the processes of the imagination.

Among the poets who do not transcend the commonplace or the ridiculous will be those who trust this procedure either too little or too much. Edgar Guest and Ella Wheeler Wilcox are doubtless wise in not trusting it very much and so remaining safely in the commonplace where they belong. Gertrude Stein trusts it enormously, with the result that she is never commonplace but frequently ridiculous. Joyce Kilmer doesn't watch it closely enough, A. E. Housman subjects it to a rigorous selective discipline, T. S. Eliot invites it deliberately and exploits it with consummate skill. Perhaps it will profit us to consider briefly examples from two of these.



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Just as Joyce Kilmer's "Trees" is too well known in print and song to need quoting here, so has it been too well drawn and quartered by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, in *Understanding Poetry*, to be commented on without due acknowledgment to these critics. In this poem about a tree, the poet has thrown his idea out as a bait to whatever images will rise to it but has let his idea—which is that trees are pretty good—be pushed around in the rip tides until it is as dizzy as it makes the reader. "Trees" has been popularly accepted as the sincere, beautiful, reverent, and intelligible statement of a fundamental truth. Brooks and Warren have revealed it as an insincere, unconsciously blasphemous, and finally unintelligible attempt to state what would, if it were really stated, be obvious nonsense.

But everybody knows what the poem means? Doubtful. Who knows, for example, whether it means that a tree is lovely because it is like a human being or because it is unlike a human being? But granted that we know what it means, that will be in spite of rather than because of what it says. It will probably be because Wordsworth and most of the romantic poets since Wordsworth have told us that Nature, including trees, is cosily sublime (a philosophy which, declares Aldous Huxley, Wordsworth might well have had to revise if he had attempted to export it to the tropics).

Be that as it may, a poet has a right to find trees lovely, if he wants to, for trees often are lovely. All we need ask is that he be sensible about it. In our second illustrative poem, A. E. Housman's "Loveliest of Trees,"\* the poet is sensible about it:

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride  
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
Twenty will not come again,  
And take from seventy springs a score,  
It only leaves me fifty more.

\* From *A Shropshire Lad*, reprinted by permission of the publishers, Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

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And since to look at things in bloom  
Fifty springs are little room,  
About the woodlands I will go  
To see the cherry hung with snow.

This poem is as simple as Kilmer's "Trees," but not so simple-minded. It says that since life is too short to absorb all the world's beauty we can do no better than spend our time absorbing what little we can of it. But though it says this in but one clear image, it says it in three voices—the voices of sentiment, of gaiety, and of irony. The irony restrains the sentiment and fuses the gaiety with the pathos. The execution is nigh to perfection, combining as it does the maximum of deftness with the greatest of ease. Its lucidity is like that of Blake's "The Tiger" and "The Lamb"—a deceptive lucidity like that of deep, clear water. It is because of this quality in the poem that one can return to it innumerable times and find it still baffling and lovely—as baffling and lovely as the flight of spring beauty, which like all true beauty leaves us with the knowledge that we have only glimpsed it in its passage.

In each of the two poems we have adduced, then, we have found the poet partially abandoning a thought to a mood and seeking to tell us more than he can know as a thought only. As George Santayana put it, in "The Elements of Poetry": "Our logical thoughts dominate experience only as the parallels and meridians make a checkerboard of the sea. They guide our voyage without controlling the waves, which toss forever in spite of our ability to ride over them to our chosen ends. Sanity is a madness put to good use; waking life is a dream controlled."

In his famous "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads" (1800) Wordsworth wrote something to the effect that the poets of his time, seeking a universal language, were largely limited to images and symbols drawn from Nature, for while everyone was familiar with the birds and the flowers, the sky and the sea, a comparative few could get a corresponding stimulus from the symbols of science (or technology?). But if, added the poet, the time should ever come when men would be as familiar with the latter as with the former, then the poet would enter that realm also.

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Perhaps the reader of poetry has by now made a long stride in that direction. He surely finds himself in an altered cosmos in which no fact in unaltered Nature can have arrested his attention more emphatically than the fact and implications of man-made atomic fission. And he is likely to have been equally staggered by contemporary revelations of psychological fission. Even as amateurs we should now know too much about how the human mind works to indulge ourselves in surprise at any poetic revelations of its eccentricities—or to indulge ourselves in anger, either.

The friend whom I heard cry in righteous indignation, at an exhibition of modern art, "Why, I've got a six-year-old child at home who can draw better than that!" is a case in point. He stalked off confident that he had been enraged by pretentious inferiority rather than by difference.

Maybe he was right; maybe he was wrong; maybe he was lazy; maybe he was ignorant; maybe he was born before 1900.

It's a dangerous business, this business of passing judgments. It's especially dangerous in an accelerating age.

Small wonder that Peer Gynt offered to bestow all his kaiserdoms upon anyone who would show him a signpost upon which was written, "Here lies your path."

Walt Whitman wrote "The Song of the Answerer," but that was well before the beginning of what Thomas Hardy called "our prematurely afflicted century."

Hardy said, "No answerer I."

Come over and help us.

# 1900-1950: A RETROSPECT

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by Philo M. Buck, Jr.

NINETEEN HUNDRED: The Spanish-American War was over; X-rays had been discovered; Marconi had perfected his wireless telegraph; mathematical physicists were beginning to inquire into the secret of the atom. In five years Einstein was to announce the new law of relativity. The new psychology was as youthfully active with William James; Jung and Freud were close behind, with such terms as psychoanalysis, psychiatry, the id. Biology was beginning to question and supplement the workings of the Darwinian law of the origin of species and to talk of unpredictable and rapid mutations. Thanks to science, 1900 looked like the dawn of a new day, and youth in our expanding universities again quoted the hundred-year-old lines: "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, / But to be young was very Heaven!"

There was an urge no less new in philosophy. The reign of the German transcendentalists was nearly over. William James and Dewey were using the new word, pragmatism. It was William James who told us that philosophy must now "detour Emmanuel Kant." Poincaré was defining a new philosophical and mathematical logic, and Bergson was about to publish his *Creative Evolution*. Philosophy, Science, Mathematics seemed ready to join in celebrating a New Age and a return of the Golden Years.

There were stirrings also in the Old World even in farthest Asia. Nationalisms were becoming vocal. India was finding its voice in the All-India National Congress; China was soon to shock the complacent West by the Boxer Uprising; the Philippines, freed from Spain, were looking toward a complete national independence already promised them; Japan was building armies and ships to check the aggression of czarist Russia. The whole world was astir, alert, waiting for the new word that would usher in the new day.

What were we reading then? Tennyson and Browning had passed their prime. There was the poetry of Rimbaud, and Malarmé, and Yeats. Thackeray and Dickens and George Eliot were classics, al-



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most as far away as Fielding and the tradition of Rome and Greece. The promise of the time seemed better to be found in George Meredith, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, and the down-to-earth realism of William Dean Howells. If we wished to live in the world of exotic adventure, we turned avidly to Joseph Conrad. Across the water was other inspiration — Ibsen, Hauptmann, the new schools of France.

In 1900, then, the happy life, the secure life, seemed almost within human grasp. No one dreamed that our new wealth could be a prelude to two world wars without a parallel in history, or could lead to disenchantment, disillusion—even, for some, to a foreboding that the house of civilization itself could not endure.

Today, in 1950, burdened with doubt, timid and insecure, we read a contemporary meaning into the old and familiar lines of Virgil:

Happy is he who knows the nature of things, and holds  
Under foot every fear, inexorable Fates; yea,  
Even the roar of the ever hungry River of Death.

Does knowledge subdue fear? we ask. Does inquiry into the nature of things promote the good life? Are the revelations of philosophy and science the treasure we dreamed them to be a scant fifty years ago? Is reason still a secure guide? Is the moral will?

It was a bleak day in Rome's history when the youthful Virgil described his ideal of the happy life. It was a time, also, not unlike ours, a time of disintegrating hope in a war-embroiled world, with Peace a mirage on an ever receding horizon. It was a time when humanity seemed ready to give up its faith in its own excellence; when its faith in the gods seemed little more than a romantic dream. There is a tinge of melancholy in Virgil's retreat to the duties of the countryside and the beauty of nature. But there is also in his verse the iron of a resolute faith, a refusal to surrender in the perennial

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war of reason against ignorant fear and Fate. And never in literature, ancient or modern, has the meaning of the humanities been set forth with simpler power than by the youthful Virgil.

To understand the cause and nature of things, to conquer fear—this has been the fortress that man in all these millennia of human history has striven to build against an unknown and devouring world. This is the perpetually recurring ideal of what all ages, from the time of Virgil, have called the humanities. They are, in their varied aspects, the sum of the human tradition. They are not abstract documents, but a way of life. They are civilization.

We may call them, also, the treaties man has made with the inhospitable world. And literature is the record of these treaties. Our latest centuries have only widened the scope of the adventure, brought new realms into knowledge, devised new weapons in the long war against fear. Our treaties with life today differ from those in the past only in the larger number of details in their articles. In this sense the humanities are never a closed book.

And yet there are those of us, in these trying days, who from disappointment and loss of hope would destroy all traces of the past and of the human tradition that seems to have played us false, and would begin again—a new world for a new future. It was an unknown Italian poet, in the meager years following the first World War, who gave words to this thought:

*Morto e il passato, e con baionette stiamo  
Uccidendo il presente per mettere in Trono il Futuro.*

The past is dead; with bayonets  
Let us stand slaying the present to enthrone the future.

A useless wish! Past and present—out of them the future is born. If wishes could put into action even such instruments forged from the past as we now possess, the golden new world could begin—perhaps tomorrow? We all carry in our memories the story of Aladdin and his lamp. The world seems waiting now for a twentieth-century Aladdin out of whose rubbing of the lamp of science will come the fulfillment of all wishes.

Yet even as a small boy I had my doubts about Aladdin. He achieved the beautiful Budruldour, he destroyed the wicked necromancer, but—did he know the nature of things? Was he free from fear? There were times when I was even sorry for Aladdin. If magic palaces and sultans' daughters are creatures of no more effort than a pass at a miracle-mongering lamp, then effort, in its turn, becomes no more than an ignoble sign of human bondage. Alone in all this deluge of lamp-induced plenty, a Faust poised on the brink of the cataract of an unending fulfillment of wishes, surely Aladdin is no symbol of security, no symbol of the conquest of fear.

For Aladdin was cascaded out of the world in which humanity lives and thinks and works and seeks security, into one irresponsibly new. Old values, old obligations, old human relations and standards of conduct could have no meaning to one who with a wave of the hand could tomorrow erase by magic all that by magic he had built today. There is a moral to this story of Aladdin with its removal of the need for human struggle. This kaleidoscope of perpetual change can be an allegory for us and our world today.

There is, though, another story which should be recalled along with the story of Aladdin. One finds it in a Chinese folk tale of a century long before the first Christmas. It tells of an inventor who perfected a flying chariot. When word of his invention came to the Emperor, he summoned the Chinese Darius Green to give an exhibition of the new gadget. Together, mounted in the chariot, they became companions of clouds and birds. Back on earth, the Emperor turned to the creator of miracles. "Marvelous!" he granted, "but, alas, too marvelous to be of any good to my people." And he commanded that the chariot be destroyed and that the inventor never create another.

Here again is a tale with its obvious allegory but an allegory with a difference. Aladdin in his ever changing world can have no place for an abiding human tradition. Thus he provides himself with no shelter of past experience with which to shut out fear. To the cautious Chinese Emperor any new thing is a defiance of tradition, one bringing with it the dangers which accompany change. He

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is in a perpetual circle of fear. The antithesis is evident—perpetual flux or encrusted habit. Where shall we choose between them?

Today the Aladdins have the field. Every year brings its "New Look," whether an atomic bomb, a cosmetic, or a substitute for an established human value. In our gadgets we are farther away from the age of our grandparents than they were from that of Abraham. Lincoln was closer cousin to Nebuchadnezzar than we today are to Lincoln.

Invention has pushed even into regions once deemed safe from that intrusion. The new state, fortified by the devices of psychologist, biologist, and efficiency engineer, a state whose citizens are scientifically conditioned for service, and where life has lost all insecurity and so all fear—such a state is portentously possible. George Orwell has set its date for 1984. And Aldous Huxley is fashioning a philosophy and way of life to which he can retire from the "Brave New World" of the immediate future. Were Orwell and Huxley only successors of Jules Verne, we could be amused by their satire. But a goodly fragment of the world is already winding the clock of the new scientifically mechanized and controlled state and setting its hands for the hour when it will be the state universal.

What has brought about this revolution within the length of fifty years? Who are the scientists or the philosophers who have so altered our conception both of the physical world and of ourselves, the dwellers in it? Above all the rest, there are perhaps three: Einstein, whose study in astrophysics has, in lesser intellects, destroyed much of man's faith in the ultimate comprehensibility of his universe; Bergson, to whom, as docile minds try to interpret him, the *élan vital* is a directionless flow, a current where man's vaunted reason has only the power of a spent swimmer in a dark stream; Freud, the application or misapplication of whose theories has altered our mental attitudes until even the heroes of the past are of more interest to us for their complexes than for their accomplishments.

Are human beings and the human tradition strong enough, elastic enough, to accept and digest the new world of man and nature which these men and their followers have opened to us? Our earlier stand-



ards seem at the moment to have been thrown on the scrap heap. Even as late as at the beginning of this century one could use such terms as "time and space" and "laws of motion" with some sense of their meaning. Man physically, as well as intellectually and morally, had with the old Greek scientists a *πού στῶ*, a place *where one could stand*, and map the universe in a manner not essentially different from that of the householder who landscapes his acreage and plans a garden. But the new astronomy, since 1905, and Einstein, and the new physics have altered man's understanding of himself and his place in the universe. The world is no longer *his* world, a world he can measure and understand and picture to himself. The infinitely small—the atom—but nevertheless a universe in itself with its cosmic dance of protons, neutrons, electrons; the unbounded and expanding large with its cosmic dance of galaxies beyond number, each within itself an unnumbered universe—Pascal, three hundred years ago, caught a vision of this new universe and shuddered with anticipated fear:

For, finally, what is man in nature? A zero in comparison with infinity, an infinity in comparison with zero, a middle ground between nothing and all. At an infinite distance from understanding finalities, the end of things as their beginnings are for him invincibly hidden . . . equally incapable is he to see the zero from which he is drawn and the infinity in which he is engulfed. . . . The silence eternal of these infinite spaces strikes me with terror.

"Strikes me with terror"? It is this terror that grips the heart today. Have we so broken with the human tradition that man now, thanks to his instrument science, is lost in a universe of Unknowns and Unknowables? We have traveled a long way since the Greek who announced man as "the measure of all things," and the Evangelist who began his Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word."

Nor is the picture of the life within our world, the life of the individual, more morally edifying—life in ceaseless movement, unending change; the human personality a watch with its complex of hidden springs and balance wheels kept in adjustment only by the probing fingers of psychiatry.

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Through the ages, man has been, in his own eyes, the central figure of his universe. His religion, his tradition have alike reassured him here. "Let Us make man in Our image, and let him have dominion . . ." It is difficult, it is growing more difficult every day, to hold this passage as a central article in the human creed. And without it, without the settled conviction that man is the center of his universe and the maker of its values, there are left no humanities and no human tradition to be counted upon. It has been the creed underlying all art and all literature. Without it no value except a fleeting one can attach to exploration of that human tradition we call the humanities. Without the human tradition, without the humanities that have set forth this tradition, the thing we call civilization becomes no more important than the inconclusive dance of fragments within the walls of a kaleidoscope. And without a civilization, one of human meaning and human growth, of what consequence to succeeding ages are the arts that have made civilization? These are questions implicit in the contrasting stories of Aladdin and of the flying chariot.

Many people are aware of the dilemma. They are asking, "Shall we, like the Chinese Son of Heaven, order a moratorium on the instruments of science? Or shall we risk the adventure, polish and repolish the lamp, until the world of tomorrow and the humanity of tomorrow will be as strange to our way of life as ours is to that of our grandparents? Or is there a middle way?"

Within the century, we have added almost incredibly to the measure of human knowledge. We have added to our control of nature, to our comfort and luxury—and to our power of destruction. But there is still a tragic lag in our moral readiness. Such power as science has provided can be entrusted only to those whose hearts and heads are endowed with more than the present sum of human wisdom. For all the mighty conquests of the intellect, can we say that man's nature—his moral nature—has greatly altered in the recorded aeons of human history? Weapons have changed, but not the heart that prompts their use nor the ineptitude with which those promptings are released in action.

All of us are aware that this ineptitude creates at least a physi-

cal danger, but this physical danger is perhaps not the most deadly. There is the creeping danger of the slow disease that undermines man's belief in his own virtue and integrity. Losing faith in himself, he looks for security beyond himself to any who hold out the promise of a new way of well-being—a substitute for the human tradition, a synthetic, ersatz state of human happiness. And because this state is pronounced to be buttressed with all the new instruments of science, it is to be the unchanging and unchangeable State of the Future.

The battle cry of the unknown Italian poet is the slogan today of this Paradise of the Future:

The past is dead; with bayonets  
Let us stand slaying the present to enthrone the future.

This is Aladdin speaking. Again, we ask, is the reply of the Emperor the only possible alternative? Has the conflict today between science and the humanities no other issue?

To answer this question we need to understand just what we mean by the human tradition and the humanities; what is the nature and variety of the treaties that man has made with life, from its beginnings, through the long panorama of human history. They reflect, these treaties, first man's growing understanding and control of his environment, and here we read the beginnings of science. Next come the values he has attached to the varied adventure of living, and here are the origins of art, literature, and philosophy. Thus civilization, the complex of man's attitudes toward life, is a result of his growing understanding and control of his life, and of the warmth, intimacy, and immediacy of the values he attaches to the experience of living. And the humanities are man's living record of this experience distilled in science, philosophy, and art. It is the report of his adventure rescued from the chaos of accident and irrelevance, and given form and moral plot. It is humanity's monument to itself.

Unaided by his inventions, man is of all animals the most helpless; with his inventions, the most proud. "Presumption," says Montaigne, "is our natural and original infirmity. The frailest and most vulnerable of all creatures is man and at the same time the most

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arrogant. He sees and feels himself lodged here in the mud and filth of the world, nailed and riveted to the worst—and he goes and sets himself in imagination above the circle of the moon and brings heaven under his feet.” Pride and weakness, arrogance and ineptitude—in these lie the human paradox, the root of the dilemma of today. For man’s long story from its beginnings is but the record of his effort to reconcile his dual nature by the discipline of the humanities. In it one can read his hard-won faith in himself, his sense of moral freedom, his guaranty of a measure—no more—of human security and of human value. Whether he likes it or no, this world of science he has carved out is *his* world and not another’s. Consider again the lines from Virgil with which this paper began:

Happy is he who knows the nature of things, and holds  
Under foot every fear, inexorable Fate, yea,  
Even the roar of the ever-hungry River of Death.

The heathen poet Virgil, living in an age of doubt, sang this faith. One need not wonder why the Christian poet Dante, in a day of ardent faith, chose Virgil as the poet of the humanities, nor why today T. S. Eliot places the Latin poet on the same pedestal.

To conquer fear and to learn the meaning of Fate in the varied adventure of life is a fourfold adventure. There is first the never remitted adventure with the forces, hostile or benign, of nature. This battle with nature, from his first victories when he learned to create fire, fashion crude tools, and protect himself against his unnumbered foes—as a story, this is one of the proudest chapters of human history. But it was, and is, nonetheless, an uncompromising battle against fear, a battle to provide for humanity at least a narrow ledge of security on the face of the abyss of the unhuman and uncontrollable. The complex of attitudes toward life that comes from his ever increasing experience with physical nature is, then, the first ingredient in the tradition of the humanities. These attitudes are the compelling motives of science. We dare not, like the Emperor, call a moratorium on science.

Quite as important, though perhaps not so dramatic, is man’s growing experience and knowledge of himself. It is only by ex-



perience with himself, as Goethe points the moral in *Faust*, that man arrives at a knowledge of his powers and limitations, and thus finds himself and his place in the world. As with his experience with nature, so with his experience with self, there is in the beginning no easy highway set with warnings against disaster. In this adventure man has paid the price in farce, comedy, and tragedy. Its record in art and literature is of all the triumphs of civilization the most heart-warming and glorious. We dare not call a moratorium on man's effort at self-knowledge.

But man is a social animal as well as a unique individual. Whether he gazes at a sunset or sets about a homely task with his hands, his desire is for someone to whom he may communicate the values of his activity. And this desire for mutual living is as fundamentally human as the desire for food and safety. In man's experience in society, as it is recorded in statecraft and art, we have again a growing body of tradition that has directly or indirectly influenced the imagination and action of every living being. It is a long story from the savage with his slender and naïve inherited memory and imagination to the world citizen of today, rich in the inherited wealth of social science, ethics, history. We dare not call a moratorium on the social sciences.

From the beginning, too, man has been conscious that his five senses are only the narrowest of peepholes enabling him to peer out on a world of unguessed vastness, the unknown and perhaps unknowable! The human mind with its weapons of science, poetry, and philosophy, with myth, legend, superstition, and religion, battles now, and has from the beginning battled, at the frontiers of the unknown. "Light, more light" has been man's cry from the first day when as a human being he faced the enigma of human destiny, and sought for meanings in the world beyond the periphery of his five gross senses. "There's a divinity that shapes our ends." How did the human imagination, submerged in a world of sense, climb to such an hypothesis or act of faith? Was it *only* that, by propitiation of this unseen Thing, he might render himself "safe from fear"? Whence, then, arose his ideals of cosmic justice, of the infinite worth of the human spirit, of the gospel of an all-encompas-

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sing love? It is only as we today ask ourselves these questions, and see the profound influence of this transcendental realm of human experience, and the complex of attitudes toward life that has followed in its wake, it is only as we explore this fourth region of human experience, that we realize its importance in the human tradition.

And its pristine importance is scarcely waning in these our drier days of a triumphant science. The revelations of the new science, the indescribable, almost unthinkable character of the outer world as it is explored by the present-day techniques of science—how this new mystery is affecting even our most orthodox scientists! It was Lord Haldane, a generation ago, who, as president of the British Royal Society, announced: "The universe is queerer than we think; it is queerer than we can think." The unknown and the unknowable, always powerful in their sway over the human imagination, are today, after all our scientific discoveries, no less potent. It is only the "little" scientist, the laboratory technician, whose front of brass knows no humility. One feels the power of the unknown in the words of Einstein: "The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical—to know that what is impenetrable to us really exists—this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness." And his words echo those found as early as in the pages of Job. "Where was thou," thunders the Voice of the Whirlwind, "when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Declare if thou hast the power."

No, the value and the abiding nature of this fourth source of the human tradition has not greatly altered since man first questioned the unknown. It is the same cosmic whirlwind that today sweeps the electrons of the atom and the galaxies of unbounded space, its words as inscrutable as in the day of Job.

Literature and art are the record, left on sensitive minds, of the meaning and, above all, of the value of man's effort to conquer fear and learn the meaning of Fate. What is the story of the masters of literature of our past half-century? Little of it will be a story of

complacent achievement. Never, perhaps, in the world's history have the writers of literature been more serious or more troubled. Never have the thoughtful among them been less tempted to think of themselves in the role of public entertainers. It is difficult—impossible for them as for us—to assume the mask of cheerful insouciance, with the abyss yawning at their feet.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, as a protest against what then seemed the purely materialistic outlook of science, many sensitive souls proclaimed the doctrine of "Art for Art's sake." In the region of the creative imagination there was no room, they maintained, for even the nose of the camel of science. Here imagination was free, and its creations a compensation for the drab and unhuman world of scientific formulas. Their dream was a beautiful one, and its dreamers a heart-warming group—Anatole France, Maeterlinck, Rostand; the scholarly aesthete and recluse Walter Pater; in our own half-century, the philosopher, poet, novelist, George Santayana. Our human tradition would be the poorer if the zest for beauty that inspired these were lost to the world. But our century, which has cherished them and given them due honor, has done so with a reserve of caution. For art and literature are, first of all, a dealing with the issues of life, not an escape from life, a city of refuge. This fact—a conscious and reasoned decision—is the most heartening force at work among the writers of today. The half-century just ended has been a half-century of search for a home and a calling. Perhaps its symbol is Thomas Wolfe. Little has been written more poignant than his life search for warmth, affection, security, a model for life, a guide. And nothing is more true today than that "You Can't Go Home Again." The new way of life must add to, renew, and be brought into harmony with the old way. If that be impossible, then the alternative is revolution and a new world—and Aladdin.

Seventy-five years ago with Zola we became acquainted with the sociological motive in literature and the search of the sociological novelist for a new way. It began with the resolute desire to face life and not blanch at its ugliness. Today our sociological writers fall into two easily distinguished classes. There are those who,

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like Steinbeck, record the symptoms of social illness and disintegration and allow readers to draw the appropriate conclusions. There are those others who already know the remedy. These are the propagandists of the new way of life that shall do away with all ills and bring security and well-being. They can be, and usually are, the advocates of the New State, built upon the social and economic foundation patterned by Marx and his apostle Lenin. We may not ignore their work. I am thinking chiefly of Shalokhov and Leonid Leonov. We must ponder their novels. They are Aladdin speaking of his latest rub at the magic lamp.

Another group of authors is interested chiefly in the human personality and would apply to its study the latest finding of philosophy, psychology, and psychiatry. What is the human mind, and what are its workings? There is something alluring, even insidious, in the call of these new inquirers into the motives of the human personality. They raise fundamental questions: does the urge of the *élan vital*, does the newly discovered power of the subconscious and of instinct, set at naught the old belief in the disciplined and chastened moral will? Are the libido and the id and the unpredictable processes of life a substitute for the Ten Commandments and the old belief in the integrity of moral behavior? What is behavior, and is there a hierarchy in conduct; and what are its springs?

Such questions are as alluring as the song of the Sirens. And those who have gone into the laboratory of novel and drama to discover an answer are legion. There is Eugene O'Neill, for one, who, psychoanalyzing the family of Electra, offers a group of complexes that would have appalled the Greek poet's ideas of justice and moral behavior. There is Marcel Proust, who reduces personality to a succession of sentient moments, like a string of separate and radiant beads. One can add André Gide and his cult of spontaneous and unreflected action; and James Joyce, with his interest in the flow of consciousness.

To be sure, there is more, much more, to these authors. But of one thing we can be sure. Their preoccupation with the subjective has resulted in a creation that is all in their own image. There is little there in the way of an assessment of moral value, and still less



of what we may call human pattern. For example, set Joyce's *Ulysses* beside *The Brothers Karamazov* or *Crime and Punishment*.

In the next group we should place those whom we can call the searchers, searchers for a new path out of the chaos of doubt and insecurity that is the world of the present: T. S. Eliot, who has found his path, as has Jacques Maritain, in the tradition of orthodox religion; Aldous Huxley, who, like the Indian Sunyasi, has turned his affection away from the world and seeks the selflessness of the Vedanta; and Sartre, who glorifies pure will-directed action.

What we miss in all of these is evidence of that joy men heretofore have felt in the union of reason and the heart of man, and an acknowledgment of the possibilities of human excellence.

And is not this, in effect, the center of, the leading motive in, the human tradition? Is not this union the theme of what we call humanism? Joy in the perilous adventure of living, whole-souled acceptance of life, harmonious adjustment of all human faculties—this and the discovery of a meaningful pattern in life. Perhaps Thomas Mann, though sometimes encumbered by his vast erudition, is yet pointing the way. His allegory of Joseph is full of promise for humanists of the future.

The problem of the future, then, is to reconcile the motives of Aladdin and of the Chinese Son of Heaven. Only a true humanism can find the answer. Science is, after all, only one achievement of richly endowed human nature. Aladdin did not discover the lamp—he created it out of the treasures of his own endowment, one instrument out of many. His failure is due to the fact that the one became an obsession. Each of man's varied instruments today is but one part of his original endowment. Should Aladdin be allowed to have the full field of human activity, remold human personality, society, and the state according to the slide rule of science, banishing mystery and the world of the spirit, it would be a sad day for all civilization. On that day—I quote T. S. Eliot—those come into power who are “destroying our ancient edifices to make ready the ground on which the barbaric nomads of the future will encamp in their mechanized caravans.” They are ready, those barbarians, and waiting, and eager.

*by Wallace Stegner*

NO ONE can be in Cairo two hours without realizing how completely the keeping of cordial relations between Egypt and the United States depends upon some satisfactory solution of the Palestine question, and most immediately the problem of the million-odd Arab refugees who want to return to their homes. But no one can be in Cairo for two days without being aware that the Egyptian attitude toward Americans has moderated greatly since the suspicion and resentment of two years ago, and he could not stay two weeks without realizing how much of the moderation is due to agencies which have been steadily and devotedly representing the United States as formal and informal ambassadors.

There is, of course, the USIE section at the Embassy, well planned, well staffed, well patronized. The library, hobby rooms, children's library, and other facilities are free to any Egyptian on presentation of the routine Egyptian identity card, and they are appreciated. The only weaknesses of the cultural relations program are that it is official, and hence may be subject to some suspicion, and that it reaches primarily the educated part of the population. (Official government figures give Egypt 20 percent literacy; private sources estimate male literacy at 15 percent, female at considerably less.) The cultural program could not by itself, therefore, have convinced Egyptians of our good will without assistance from other quarters. There have been several sources of assistance.

The American Mission, with headquarters in Cairo but operations all up and down the Nile, is an ancient and respected promoter of good will and good works. It conducts schools in Assuit and Luxor, a hospital in Assuit, another in Tanta, and its American College for Girls in Cairo has been a pioneer in liberating Egyptian women for intellectual and social activity.

Less well known than its Beirut counterpart, the American College is still an intellectual force in Cairo, and shares with the King

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Fouad I University the job of educating Cairo's men. Two organizations of a more specialized kind, one old and one new, provide a means of co-operation between Americans and Egyptians in the study of Egypt's past. These are the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, which has its base at Luxor, and the newly formed American Research Center, which is headed by a Fulbright grantee from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. And, serving a pressing need, there is the Lillian Thacher Orphanage, of forty years' standing, which houses six hundred children and has never in its history turned away an applicant child.

All of these are solid allies of our government, but there are two other agencies which may have been and may yet be still more potent helpers, though like the others they are organized for quite other purposes than information or propaganda.

One is the Rockefeller Foundation's public health experiment in five villages near Cairo. Under the brilliant directorship of Dr. John M. Weir, that project has already, a little more than halfway through its planned life, demonstrated astonishing things: that even an Egyptian village can be made virtually flyless at only moderate cost; that infant mortality can be brought down, by relatively simple and inexpensive measures, from four hundred in a thousand to less than one hundred; that communicable diseases can be drastically reduced and uneducated people taught to practice rudimentary sanitation; and that Egypt's struggling and earnest Public Health Service, which annually spends more than five times as much per head to combat contagions as the average state in the United States, can vastly increase its effectiveness without significant increase in expense.

Dr. Weir's project, undertaken in collaboration with the Egyptian government, is bearing and will bear results which will be almost immediately felt by every Egyptian, and if it turns out that a new problem arises out of the old, this is nothing new. No country with a high turnover in life and death can substantially lower its death rate without facing the problem of its birth rate, and this Egypt will have to do. But the attack which Dr. Weir and the Egyptian Public Health Service have made on the sanitation of the five

sample villages is collaboration of a practical and friend-making kind.

There is also a second health agency, little publicized and un-honored by visiting Congressmen or newsmen, but enjoying the warmest support from the Egyptian government. It does not cost the American taxpayer much, and its results are not especially newsworthy—yet. Nevertheless, its work is of the highest importance to Egypt, America, and the world at large. It may easily save Egypt alone thousands of lives and millions of dollars, without ever straying from what could be defined as enlightened American interest. It gains importance by the fact that it is the only one of its kind in the world.

Its name is the United States Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3 (Nos. 1 and 2 are extinct). It succeeded the American Typhus Commission when that group dissolved in 1945, and it inhabits some made-over British barracks on two and a half acres of ground near Cairo's Abbassia Fever Hospital. Its purpose is basic research—"pure" research—in the tropical and exotic diseases which in a shrinking world are everybody's concern and in a dangerous world are the special concern of the United States Navy.

In America, as NAMRU-3's director, Captain James Sapero, remarks, it would take months or years to assemble fifty study cases of malaria, typhoid, typhus, cholera, bilharziasis, or any of the tropical killers. Fifty cases of any one of them can be assembled in a few hours from Abbassia's thronging wards, and glad to come, too, for the additional care. Egyptian approval of the project and lease of the ground is thus a considerable favor to the United States, but it is a favor with reciprocal benefits.

"Basic research" is a formidable concept, and its demands are not satisfied nor its results posted in a day. NAMRU-3 had almost three years of building and planning before it felt itself ready to go ahead full steam. As of 1950, Captain Sapero describes its equipment with loving emphasis as "superb and complete." And its work starts from absolute scratch.

It includes a virtual zoological garden of animals used in research—cobras and lizards and vipers, rats and mice and guinea



pigs and hamsters, foxes and gazelles and baboons, flies and mosquitoes and snails. The project has even, as in the snails used in bilharziasis research, been forced to develop a "standard" strain for laboratory purposes, and in the midst of Egypt, of all places, it grows its own flies.

Specific investigations are grouped under four general areas of research. One is flies, of which Egypt has more than God's plenty: the plague which was visited on the valley of the Nile in Moses' time has never abated, except in Dr. Weir's experimental villages. And the importance of flies to communicable disease is obvious, even though not thoroughly understood. Another major research project, being carried on by two distinguished Navy physiologists, involves the study of Dextran, the synthetic substitute for plasma. Dextran, brand new and still perfectible, would be indispensable in an atomic war. A third group of experiments revolves around the screening of chemicals in search of antibiotics, and this overlaps with the fourth, the study of bilharziasis. In bilharziasis investigations alone, between ten and twenty thousand chemicals will be screened and tested.

And what is bilharziasis, and why does it concern America? Well, thus.

An Egyptian farmer, one of the disease-pestered fellahin, relieves himself beside a canal. From his intestines come the eggs of the *Bilharzia* worm, *Schistosoma mansoni*. The eggs float around until they encounter a snail, which they enter and infect. The snail in turn expels still another form of egg, one with an auger nozzle, and when these eggs come against the legs of a wading child, the arms of a woman washing clothes, the ankles of a farmer working his Archimedes' screw at the ditch-head, they burrow into the skin. Inside the human tissues the eggs hatch into all-but-microscopic double white worms, which, incessantly linked in copulation, release other eggs which bore through bladder walls and intestine walls to be vented in other canals to the undoing of other snails and other Egyptians. Ninety-two percent of Egypt's population are said to have bilharziasis, which is sometimes fatal and always debilitating. Captain Sapiro calls it the Number One African disease.

And there is no reason why it could not be introduced into the United States. There is no reason an American wading an African river would be unpalatable to the *Bilharzia* egg, and no reason why he should not sometime later relieve himself by a California irrigation ditch or on the banks of the Rio Grande.

Annually, it appears, the government of Egypt spends at least two and a half million dollars trying to control bilharziasis, principally by poisoning snails in the canals. By the time NAMRU-3 gets through with its experiments, Egypt may well know not only the best point of attack in *Schistosoma's* complicated life cycle, but may also know all the conditions of environment contributing to infection, may know specific antibodies for treatment of the disease, may know precisely the effectiveness of various snail poisons and precisely the time of year or day, high or low water, to apply them. It may, in other words, be well on the way to getting rid of bilharziasis. That kind of result, which is not only possible but likely, would be both medical and political news.

Suppose one picked at random a few of NAMRU-3's experiments, many of them already published in the professional journals, all of them scheduled for eventual publication. It is easy to see why publicity has not thus far haunted the unit: "Evaluation of Two Dinitro Compounds as Molluscicides"; "Susceptibility of Wild Rodents to Infection by *Schistosoma mansoni*"; "Intestinal Parasitological Survey in an Egyptian Village"; "Benzene Hexachloride Resistant Houseflies"; "The Influence of pH on the Adsorption of Influenza Viruses on Aluminum Hydroxide."

Strange business for the United States Navy, in collaboration with a friendly foreign power. And not a headline in the lot. But it is a fruitful collaboration, full of enthusiasm and mutual respect. The only effect of the violent anti-American feeling in 1948 was to get the unit out of uniform. It has worked in civilian clothes ever since. But the Egyptian parliament approved its lease in the very midst of the 1948 riots—a tribute both to NAMRU-3 and to the Egyptian parliament.

It is only by the help of its friends, even so, that NAMRU-3 survived former Secretary Johnson's economies. It was already

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removed from the budget when the State Department, knowing its value, went to bat for it. It was restored, but with reduced funds, so that its research team working in the Sudan had to be recalled, and one of Captain Sapero's pets, the training program for Egyptian laboratory technicians, has had to be cut down. This year, with hopes for a restored budget, NAMRU-3 hopes to have more Egyptians among its personnel.

Egypt has just got around to requesting Point Four aid. There are plenty of areas where she could use help, and some of them, especially those involving foreign investment, may be the subject of vigorous debate because of the lingering suspicion among Egyptians of economic imperialism on the part of America. But health is one of the immediate and vital areas of need, and in NAMRU-3, as well as in the Rockefeller sanitation survey in the villages, Egyptians have had a striking demonstration not only of specific American skills, but also of American willingness to co-operate without controlling. Everybody engaged on those projects, either American or Egyptian, has been an ambassador. NAMRU-3, being an official organization sustained out of public funds, represents the best small investment in international friendship that I can think of, and one of the best pilot studies for an effective and useful Point Four program in Egypt.

# OF YOUTH AND AGE:

## JAMES GOULD COZZENS

JAMES GOULD COZZENS has been writing distinguished novels for twenty years, but, with a few exceptions, the critics have only recently begun to take him seriously. Some of them now seem to be trying to justify the omission by underlining his deficiencies. They note a certain antiseptic coldness, a "passionate detachment," in his underlying attitude and tone. He has wit, rather than humor; good sense, rather than wisdom. Wisdom, they say, implies warmth as well as objectivity, and Cozzens keeps too tight a rein on his feelings. He is, moreover, illiberal if not actually reactionary, and his interests seem to be limited, with snobbish exclusion, to the upper middle class.

How much of this is true, and to what degree, I am not concerned to decide. Most novelists have faults, or at least limitations, and it is part of a critic's job to point these out—though one could sometimes wish that critics undertook this duty less gleefully. A major job of criticism is to illuminate its object, and an account of a novelist's limitations may be a useful way of revealing what he has accomplished in spite of them. But it may also be allowed that analysis of the qualities a writer actually has is just as useful as pointing out the qualities he should have,

or might have; and the former course is the only sensible procedure for one who does not feel himself qualified to say what a novelist ought to have done with his books. What Cozzens has done is to write at least four major novels, which are original in that they ignore the literary fashions of their times and are unified by the reflection of a persistent attitude on the part of the author.

The exclusions implied by the term "major novels" reflects, of course, my personal reaction to Cozzens' works. Most critics agree that the early novels, however interesting genetically, are experimental and hardly representative. Concerning those published during the last twenty years, there is some disagreement. To me, *S.S. San Pedro* (1931) seems a skillful tour de force; *Castaway* (1934), a brief and unsuccessful excursion into fantasy; and *Ask Me Tomorrow* (1940), a strangely ambiguous and unsatisfactory comedy of manners. The tone of this last work, as well as the epigraph, suggests a comparison, in motivating disgust at least, with Shakespeare's "bitter" comedies. Louis Gannett guessed *Ask Me Tomorrow* to be either "a very young novel, dug out . . . and rewritten with distaste, or . . . the 37-year-old writer's embittered report on the 23-year-old novelist he was."



by Frederick Bracher

The four major novels so far are *The Last Adam* (1933), *Men and Brethren* (1936), *The Just and the Unjust* (1942), and *Guard of Honor* (1948). They are concerned respectively with a New England doctor and a typhoid epidemic, an Episcopal clergyman in a slum area of New York City, an assistant district attorney during a murder trial, and the varied personnel of an Army air base in Florida in wartime. In each of them a particular society and the mores of a particular profession are inextricably intertwined with the fortunes of the protagonist. All of them are full of good shoptalk, done with remarkable accuracy. Each of them gains in dramatic intensity because the action is limited to a relatively short period of time—a few days in *The Last Adam* and *The Just and the Unjust*, a week end in *Men and Brethren* and *Guard of Honor*.

All of them share and reflect a persistent habit of mind in the author, for which I can find no better term than "philosophic." The technical sense of the term is probably least important, though quotations and allusions ranging from Aristotle to Barth are plentiful. Much more relevant is the fact that Cozzens' values are those traditionally associated with the sage, and with the teachings, if not always the practice, of philosophers. Cozzens does not really admire, though he recognizes and allows for, the dark, dynamic energies

of man. Few of his characters are ever carried away, and those who do succumb to enthusiasm are portrayed unsympathetically. Lieutenant Edsell, with his passion for the underdog and his burning sense of injustice, is treated with especial bitterness. After his behavior has shown him to be a sentimental fool, Cozzens sums him up as "the well-known sorehead," product of early thwarting and personal unfulfillment. People who habitually follow their impulses, who are "true to themselves," in the words of one unhappy romantic, are fairly sure to come to no good end. They may be subhuman machines like the General's "nervy little murderer," Colonel Carriker, or unstable neurotics like the renegade monk in *Men and Brethren*, or social misfits like the weak-willed, harried, half-sick criminals in *The Just and the Unjust*. So long as any of these adhere to the Whitmanesque fallacy of trustfully accepting themselves, they are damned.

An exception is Dr. George Bull, the last Adam, who resembles his animal namesake in violent, surly self-sufficiency. Dr. Bull, unmarried and childless (though by no means chaste), is the antithesis of the "social" man. He is temperamentally unfit to live in any group which he cannot dominate. A shrewdness born of long experience serves him as well as intelligence, and he is completely

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free of guilt reactions or neurotic doubts. To Cozzens he must represent what the psychologists call the "id": the violent, irrational, primal source of energy in man. Dr. Bull has, in bountiful measure, "something unkillable, something here when the first man walked erect . . . a good greedy vitality . . . never quite fed full." We see him in a memorable picture sitting in the dark kitchen of the bare old farmhouse of his mistress, like a caveman taking his ease. He is sixty-seven years old; he has just survived a rattlesnake bite, a typhoid epidemic, and a town meeting called to oust him from office. Now, danger temporarily over, he grunts comfortably in the heat from the fireplace and drinks whisky with his mistress. Dr. Bull is a unique type among Cozzens' characters: a man we are expected to admire chiefly for his appetite and vitality.

In the great majority of cases, what Cozzens asks us to admire in men is control. He has a passion for order and self-discipline, and biographical sketches bear out the impression that he is by temperament a conservative. Even in the 'thirties, when conservatism was not popular in literary circles, Cozzens was unashamedly hostile to theories and reforms which seemed to threaten established institutions; and his heroes follow the pattern. Abner Coates, the district attorney in *The Just and the Unjust*, is a Republican mainly because he values order and stability and tries to conserve both. Ernest

Cudlipp, in *Men and Brethren*, is a priest in the Episcopal church partly by the accidents of circumstance but mainly because he clings to orthodox theology and tradition and can't go all the way to Rome. For the terrors and ecstasies of emotional religion, whether mystical or Methodist, he is temperamentally unsuited, though he understands the pietistic perhaps better than they do themselves. The two men just named, with their temperate, disciplined assurance, show the earlier stages of the ripened maturity to be found in Colonel Ross (*Guard of Honor*), the latest and most finished example of the Cozzens hero.

Cozzens is a philosophic novelist in the same sense that George Eliot is: he has a passion for analyzing and explaining what he observes. This cast of mind can be defeating for a novelist, as Aldous Huxley has demonstrated. Characters can be analyzed away. One of Cozzens' gifts, however, is the ability to explain his characters and reflect on their relation to man in the abstract without impairing their impact as characters in a novel. Man thinking as well as man acting is Cozzens' subject matter, and the reflections he puts into the minds and mouths of his more thoughtful characters often have the neat, paragraphic pungency of good philosophic writing.

It would be futile to try to formulate a coherent philosophy from Cozzens' books. As a novelist he is first interested in personalities, and a complete, reasoned, explicit state-

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ment of belief is not required of a novelist. But certain ideas, or complexes of ideas, recur frequently enough in the novels to suggest that Cozzens shares them.

There is, for example, an almost complacent acceptance of inequalities in human kind. Cozzens seems to share the Christian pessimism regarding man's perfectibility which is exhibited in the thought and works of the Reverend Ernest Cudlipp. On the political level, this attitude manifests itself in a distrust of radical, or even liberal, attempts to correct social abuses. Cozzens' attitude toward the Negro is not, of course, to be identified with that of individual characters in the books. But nonetheless one gets the impression that the author is leaning far backward to avoid sentimental propaganda; and in view of the glaring injustices under which Negroes actually live, Cozzens' objectivity is apt to strike the reader as cold-blooded and unsympathetic, if not downright hostile.

Even if social inequalities could be ironed out, men are still born unequal. The spread between the lower levels of human potentiality and the higher is a difference in degree which amounts almost to a difference in kind. Abner Coates thinks of himself, modestly enough, as fairly intelligent. The fact that he has carried off no honors in college or law school he attributes to indolence: he did not want the honors badly enough to exert himself. But a fellow student soon demonstrates that Ab-

ner's good mind is simply not good enough for competition with truly gifted intelligences, and the reader, who has been thinking of Abner (and of himself) as having intelligence well out toward the upper end of the curve of normal distribution, is forced by this contrast to realize that the thinning end of the graph extends into regions not dreamed of in his philosophy.

An earnest, modest, somewhat maladjusted statistician in *Guard of Honor* exemplifies "a brain of the very first order, a brain whose specially developed capacities exceeded those of the ordinary, so-called intelligent human being's as much as the ordinary, so-called intelligent human being's brain exceeded in its capacities those of, say, a fish's cerebellar nerve mass." Lieutenant Andrews, shown five samples of a Navy code by a cryptographic officer, quite innocently sits down in a corner and, in his head in about an hour, works out the principle, to the astonished horror of naval security officers, and for all practical purposes breaks the code. The various morals—political, ethical, and social—to be drawn from this tremendous disparity in the special abilities of men, Cozzens does not elaborate. But his characters are conceived with such differences in mind, and part of the interest afforded by Cozzens' view of the panorama of human behavior comes from the interrelations of people who live



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on different levels of awareness and potentiality.

Whatever a man's gifts, they ripen slowly throughout his life, and the men we meet in the world of Cozzens' novels represent not only different potentialities but also different stages in the long process of ripening. Some of the most ironic contrasts center on the difference between youth and age. Sir Francis Bacon supplies a possible epigraph for Cozzens' novels considered as a whole:

Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon absurdly; use extreme remedies at first; and that which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them, like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with a mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compound employments of both.\*

As a description of Cozzens' characters, youthful, middle-aged, and old, this is remarkably apt. But it is doubtful that Cozzens would agree with another of Bacon's conclusions:

For the moral part, youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic . . . Certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit rather

in the powers of understanding than in the virtues of the will and affections.

Cozzens' novels suggest a belief that the virtues of the will and affections can be perfected only through understanding, and that, consequently, despite the existence of old fools and old devils, age will have the pre-eminence: a good old man is better, because more understanding and more controlled, than a good young man.

Here, in short, is a writer who values maturity above all; and though men sometimes mature relatively young, the middle-aged man is more likely to be mature in more ways. One can almost say that the typical Cozzens hero, in the major novels at least, is the middle-aged man, the man who is fully formed, aware of his powers, not inhibited by a knowledge of his weaknesses, and hence assured. Ernest Cudlipp, the clergyman hero of *Men and Brethren*, is forty-five. Abner Coates, hero of *The Just and the Unjust*, is in his middle thirties. General Beal, the central figure of *Guard of Honor*, is in his forties, and the real hero of the novel—that is, the always admirable character—is Colonel Ross, aged sixty-odd.

Cozzens does not share the naïve popular admiration of youthfulness per se, which Sr. Ortega y Gasset characterizes as a "half ridiculous, half disgraceful phenomenon of our time." In *The Revolt of the Masses* this worship of youth is traced to an unwillingness to accept obligations:

\* Quotations from the novels of James Gould Cozzens appear by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, publishers.



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People call themselves "young" because they have heard that youth has more rights than obligations . . . The youth, as such, has always been considered exempt from *doing* or *having done* actions of importance.\*

The adjective "promising" applied to a young man has a faintly condescending ring, and Cozzens seems to be more interested in men who have either achieved or failed and thus can no longer be patronized.

The process of maturing is a common theme in fiction, but Cozzens is not apparently much interested in the *Bildungs-roman*. Rather, his conception of people, like his conception of society, is curiously static: he shows examples of the fully matured personality and contrasts them with the callow. The process by which the callow youth acquires control and becomes the man of ripe judgment is implied but seldom traced in detail. We observe General Beal, to be sure, at a climactic point in his career, and the arrival of General Nichols, hatchetman from the Chief of Air Staff, gives dramatic tension to the moment in which Beal takes the next step toward maturity. Still, it is the condition of maturity — analyzed, described, evaluated — rather than the process of maturing which interests Cozzens. Taken as a whole, the novels show men at all stages of youth and age; and even in a single book, *The Just and the Unjust*, we find George Stacey uncertain in his early twenties, Abner Coates grow-

ing in wisdom as he approaches his mid-thirties, Martin Bunting competent and sure at forty-five, Jesse Gearhart at a disillusioned fifty-five, and old Judge Coates struggling despite a partial paralysis to recover the serenity proper to the middle sixties. The different ages of man are illustrated with apparent objectivity; but throughout the novels the middle-aged characters appear more admirable than the young, and the reader is left with a strong impression that the virtues of maturity are highly desirable.

One of the criteria of maturity seems to be freedom from illusion, and Cozzens' attitude appears strikingly in a contrast between Wilber Quinn, the assistant vicar in *Men and Brethren*, and General Nichols, in *Guard of Honor*, preternaturally mature at forty. Wilber Quinn, an ordained graduate student from General Seminary, is thoroughly likable. He is boyish, clean, and well groomed, with an air of amiable common sense rather than intelligence. He enjoys "the buoyant, optimistic insensibility of the so-called sound mind in a strong and healthy body." Throughout a series of misadventures and rebuffs he is sustained by "the enthusiasm of his inexperience." He rushes in where angels fear to tread, dabbles in Marxism and Buchmanism, aches to improve man's material condition and thus uplift his soul, and generally, in

\* Quoted by permission of the publisher, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

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the words of Ernest Cudlipp, seems "to be really a case of arrested development—one of the little children suffered with no other requirement to come to Jesus." He is thoroughly dependable: "you could rely on him, not merely in great matters of principle, but in every small matter. When he failed it was only poor judgment, or human forgetfulness. As far as his intention enabled him to be, he was perfect in the first-named fruit of the spirit. What more could you ask of any man? You could ask better sense!"

But to ask Wilber to have better sense is like asking the immature fig tree to bear fruit. Wilber's youthful indiscretion is emphasized by the presence in the book of a companion in innocence, a young poet, winner of a prize for undergraduate verse with a volume called *Sun Poems*, "very robust, and full of Indian names and American history, and infantile conceptions about the character of the pioneers, the nature of the frontier, and other optimistic clap-trap." Both young men have the arrogance of easy certainty. Wilber's assurance comes from his study of "the now popular 'Barthian' theology." Ernest Cudlipp thinks, sourly, that its chief value is "to offer a conception of religious truth which allowed modern-minded young priests like Wilber to recover that sustaining, snobbish ease of mental superiority, loved long since, but, fifty or sixty years ago, lost to the clergy for a while. In these well-cut, stylish new clothes, God could be introduced

to any company without embarrassment."

Ernest is old enough to have given up the illusion that argument achieves anything. "At Wilber's age, it was possible to believe that argument served some purpose, persuaded people, obliged those in error to turn to the truth. But soon enough you would have to wonder if an argument ever did anything beyond giving pleasure to those who already agreed with its contentions."

When Wilber attempts to engage Ernest in a "serious" discussion of clerical celibacy, he is piqued by the Vicar's lack of interest, and tries to lure him on:

"One of the fellows over at Sem.—graduate student, and really a brilliant chap . . . was discussing the whole matter of celibacy of the clergy in my rooms the other night—". . . Ernest could almost have loved Wilber for a simplicity so fresh and charming. But, ah, those intricate, endless seminary discussions! Those knowing graduate students, so brilliant, daring, paradoxical! Those urgent, dramatic spikes with a Missale Romanum in their back pockets and a complete scheme to save the Papacy's face and still get around the *Apostolicae Curae*! Those aloof, pallid, chronically constipated mystics with their Deeper Insight! Those robust, cold-bath-taking young men who knew Jesus personally—used to go to school with Him, in fact! "I hate to think of it," Ernest said sincerely.

Wilber concludes — and this is the most ironic of his illusions — that Ernest is too old to be taken seriously. "Having done his best to make an important thought clear to Ernest,

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he now gave up tolerantly. The Vicar was set in his preconceptions and prejudices. You had to expect it and make allowances." As Ernest wryly puts it, though not to Wilber, "It means I've reached the Old Fool stage—the bright young people resign themselves to humoring you."

To Cozzens, Wilber and even much older men like the genial, foolish Colonel Mowbray are "super-annuated children," who carry over and give a grown-up handling to "the boy's long, long illogical thoughts; the boy's unwarranted entertainment and unfounded terror in a state of things systematically misunderstood." Contrasted with them are the men of ripe years who are able to live without illusions. Sometimes they are twisted, malicious, and cynical, like the Democratic politician in *The Last Adam*. Sometimes they are only wearily intent on getting a job done, like Jesse Gearhart, the Republican boss in *The Just and the Unjust*. At their best, they are like General Nichols, representative of the Chief of Air Staff. General Nichols is a relatively minor figure in the complicated structure of *Guard of Honor*, and for that reason he can be treated as a "flat" character, his distinguishing qualities distilled into a few paragraphs of concentrated description and analysis.

His face "was severe and pensive, as though thinned and worn by strain or stress or trial. There was a clear mournfulness of eye, suggesting persistent if not deep ponderings, long unlighted vigils, an undeceived apprehension, a stern, wakeful grasp of the

nature of things . . . General Nichols looked out calmly, in well-earned assurance of rightly estimating the possibilities and limitations of the Here and Now, and so of being ready for what might come. . . . [He was] a man past that chief climacteric, the loss of his last early involuntary illusions. A time of choice had come and gone. At least in a limited sense it had been up to him whether he adopted, as soon as he could learn or invent them, new versions of his boy's-eye views; or whether he tried to go on without them . . . General Nichols had chosen the hard way, and now went on without them.

General Nichols clearly belongs in Cozzens' small group of supermen, though we have to take the word of other characters for his achievement. What he reveals in the novel is a manner of flawless urbanity which only kindred spirits like Colonel Ross recognize as deliberately assumed, a polite mask for the resignation with which he accepts things as they are.

To young men, resignation is no virtue, since they have no need for it. Even if they cannot actually change the things which are not as they could wish, they can derive a bitter satisfaction from the contemplation of their own unbowed, though bloody, heads. As old Judge Coates puts it, "Young men are great ones for facing facts! Even when they don't like the facts, there's a kind of tonic in them. Dwelling on how all-wrong the world is may help them to enjoy more the feeling . . . that



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they're strong, they're well, they'll live forever, they're all right."

Lieutenant Werthauer, a young neurologist who has received the signal honor of being asked to read a paper on causative factors in somatic chorea before the Neurological Society and who has spent his time in the Army treating blisters and prescribing laxatives, is far from resigned. He thought "that intelligent planning would not have put the hospital area directly up the prevailing winds from the air field. Yet the fact that there they had it afforded him a regular bitter pleasure. A hundred times a day [when planes went low overhead] his poor opinion of the military mind was recalled and increased." Lieutenant Edsell, "the unresigned man of sorrows, angrily acquainted with grief," takes a perverse pleasure in opposition. He is delighted when disparaged or attacked, since contention affords some release from "those mixed, sometimes antagonistic sentiments . . . suspicion mingled with contempt; derision never wholly free of resentment; impulsiveness hampered by calculation; vanity unsettled by doubt."

May Topping, in *The Last Adam*, is still in her twenties, but years of supporting a paralyzed husband have given her a kind of resignation, and she feels almost motherly toward Virginia Banning, spoiled daughter of the rich.

May, who hardly ever got anything she wanted herself, could feel for some one in practically the same situation. The

fact that Virginia had, or could have, almost every single thing May would like but didn't get wasn't the point. Whether you ought to want what you wanted wasn't the point, either . . . She even wished that she were intimate enough with Virginia to be able to tell her the importance of one great truth that merely being six years older than Virginia had taught May. There was a mercy in the world which you might not at first recognize. If you just kept on not getting what you wanted, you would stop wanting it in any painful way. . . . You would learn to like what you had.

Her kind of resignation is not so much a willing acceptance of what is as a desperately grasped anodyne. More admirable is the resignation exhibited by the Reverend Mr. Johnston, a broken ex-missionary to Alaska, whose ascetic life while bringing the gospel for twenty-five years to southern Alaska and the Yukon has trained him to want nothing, and who thereby achieves a limited saintliness. "The rewards of his hard, bare, devoted life, the unsearchable riches of Christ, were given him in the perfect freedom and joy of needing nothing." Ernest Cudlipp is not temperamentally an ascetic, and his renunciation of worldly values represents the triumph, after a long, open-eyed struggle, of a conviction that our peace is to be found only in His will. At forty-five, resigned acceptance is so much a part of him that he has no need even to be solemn about it. After an unusually hard day, he is oppressed by thoughts of his mis-spent youth and by the sense of pres-



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ent futility which comes with exhaustion. Wilber, fresh and buoyant, comes to the door:

"Anything wrong, sir?"

Ernest blinked, opening his eyes. "Yes," he said, sitting up. "Myself when young. There is no known remedy."

Resigning oneself to the recollection of past follies, seen in middle age with no protective illusions, no romantic coloring, is painful; but perhaps even harder to achieve is a resigned acceptance of the present and the generally unsatisfactory nature of things. Colonel Ross, standing in the General's party on the reviewing stand, is led to speculate on man's imperfections:

There never could be a man so brave that he would not sometime, or in the end, turn part or all coward; or so wise that he was not, from beginning to end, part ass if you knew where to look; or so good that nothing at all about him was despicable. This would have to be accepted. This was one of the limits of human endeavor, one of those boundaries of the possible whose precise determining was, as General Nichols with his ascetic air of being rid of those youthful illusions, viewing with no nonsense the Here and Now, always saw it, the problem. If you did not know where the limits were, how did you know that you weren't working outside them. If you were working outside them you must be working in vain. . . .

General Nichols was indeed wise, young, if he had these points clear in his mind. The not wholly satisfactory idea—that wisdom, though better than rubies, came to so little; that a few of the most-heard platitudes contained all there was of it; that its office was to acquaint you not with the abstruse or

esoteric, but with the obvious, what any fool can see—might as well be accepted, too.

Young men, in particular, have trouble accepting "what any fool can see," and one of the most comically obvious of platitudes, bitterly unacceptable to the immature male, is the fact that women are not like men, nor like what young men wish them to be, but like women. In Cozzens' novels, the women differ widely among themselves. But they are sisters under the skin in that they all need men more than the men, with a different biological foundation and wider opportunities for self-expression, need women.

[Mrs. Ross] was not by any means perfectly satisfied with [the Colonel], in spite of many changes and improvements she had made in him; but she was pretty well resigned. It was, after all, necessary to her happiness as a woman that he should retain that male ascendancy of strength, courage, and intelligence, in the notion of which she could take refuge when she was tired of exercising her superior wits. . . . It was one of those moments, fairly numerous in life, when a normal woman must wholly and heartily hate men for their folly and hypocrisy, their calousness and their conceit. There he sat, talking away—all that nonsense!—and who would want him, who would mind losing him? The heavy answer was: she would.

Lieutenant Amanda Turck, WAC, reflects to much the same purpose:

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A girl who's pretty isn't as likely to think of it so often; but even she must occasionally pull up and reflect that a woman really has to have a man, or men. I don't mean just for purposes of romance or reproduction. You need one for all kinds of things. Your whole economy is based on it, like some primitive tribe with its domestic animal. You know, the yak, maybe. They eat it, and drink the milk, and make clothes out of its fur or hair or whatever it has, and shoes out of its hide, and use it to pull a sledge, and so on. If you haven't got one, you are really on a spot. You can't lead a full life. You're definitely underprivileged, or on submarginal subsistence.

What it amounts to, as Ernest Cudlipp sees clearly, is that women have a need to be dominated and cherished, not merely gratified or companioned or supported. Unfortunately, most young men have a different ideal of the relations between the sexes. Captain Wiley, a young fighter pilot, is typical of the many men, either young or emotionally arrested, who walk through the novels with the bold, aggressive stare of the wolf.

Captain Nathaniel Hicks, speculating on Wiley's frank and indiscriminating sexuality, is led to analyze his own marital faithfulness:

Moderately warmed by whisky, Nathaniel Hicks took a look at the blonde girl on what might be called his own account; yet where Captain Wiley saw such a temptingly available delicacy, all Nathaniel Hicks saw was a lot of trouble. . . . Let irregularly into your life—oh, my God, the trials and tediums, the disgusts and annoyances, the quarrelings and repinings, with which she would quite justifiably plague you

when, having enough, you thought of withdrawing! A short course in the dear school kept for fools would learn you that Peace, O Virtue, Peace is all thine own!

Ernest Cudlipp is chaste and celibate because "drunkenness and fornication are in their nature wrong," and when his companion says, "I don't think celibacy is healthy. Haven't you any normal appetites?" Ernest replies, "Appetites depend a good deal on what you spend your time thinking about." For the most part, the young men in Cozzens' novels are as incapable of the control here implied as they are unwilling to accept the fairly obvious fact that successful relationships with women depend on wanting to do something with them, not something to them.

The obligations and renunciations of maturity are pretty thoroughly underlined by Cozzens. What of the rewards? On the whole, it appears that maturity, like virtue, is its own reward, but there are some additional consolations for the middle-aged. One which stands out, because young men in the novels so painfully lack it, is assurance. Some young men, it is true, have a kind of self-confidence due to accidental circumstances—the possession of a sound body, superb co-ordination, and a defective imagination, for example, which supports Lieutenant Colonel Carriker. Or it may be the fugitive and cloistered security of the rich boy, Lieutenant Phillips, who can buy off any person who threatens his

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poise. But Cozzens' admirable young men, earnest and honest, are often painfully aware of their lack of effectiveness.

George Stacey in *The Just and the Unjust* is a very young lawyer who has been appointed by the court to defend one of the gangsters. He has to work in co-operation with, and in public comparison with, an older lawyer among whose faults lack of assurance can hardly be included.

George's expression showed great but uncertain effort. A look at him told you that George did not know what might happen next, nor what he would do then, if for any reason he were expected to do something. George's fresh, nicely formed face was tense. He was watching Harry closely and calculatingly; he wanted to learn the secret of that assurance. He would like to imitate that ease, that ready command that sent the witness here and there. Knowing his own failings of self-consciousness, the vigor and variety of Harry's attack . . . probably discouraged George.

Abner Coates occupies a middle position. He can look with sympathetic understanding at George's floundering, seeing himself ten years younger, but he is also self-observant and honest enough to see that he, too, is green and unsure by comparison with Martin Bunting, the present district attorney. Cozzens takes some pains to describe Bunting's appearance; he probably agrees with Ernest Cudlipp that everyone is in fact exactly what he looks like, granted that you have the experience to know what you see.

Starting, when young, with no claim at all to handsomeness, Bunting's face

could be seen to have gained, as the years passed, a fineness of finish. His pointed, convex profile and long neat-lipped mouth took on character. The use of good sense, the habits of control and judgment, informed every feature with strength. Abner was aware of a mild envy, a discontent with his own looser, younger look.

Abner also realizes that his own relative superiority over George Stacey comes from the fact that, although more experienced than George, he is still free from real responsibility. As assistant district attorney, he can always say, "Ask Marty." Now that Abner is to be the district attorney, he won't have Marty to ask. Rather, George Stacey, his assistant, will be asking him. And Abner realizes that it is precisely the acceptance and exercise of responsibility that has given Bunting his solid self-confidence.

The best examples of the assurance which comes from the competent exercise of responsibility are probably to be found among the soldiers of *Guard of Honor*. We expect generals to be competent and assured, but a more appealing picture of the same qualities may be found in the noncommissioned officers of the Knock and Enter Club. This is "an informal group of the top sergeants . . . marked out from the common run by their important positions, and by the resulting special attitudes of mind and manner. Their habits were unhurried; they spoke with laconic assurance. They



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had extra privileges and established perquisites to which they helped themselves with authoritative aplomb." Possessed of more real power than most of the commissioned officers over them, indispensable to the operation of the air base, and fully aware of their abilities and their worth, these men take their ease in a forgotten storeroom, playing dominoes to show their superiority to crap-shooting GI's, and accepting or refusing calls on their homemade squawk box with lordly capriciousness.

The top sergeants show, on a relatively simple, mechanical level, most of the middle-aged virtues which Cozzens admires; and they possess in full measure the greatest of these virtues: a sense of responsibility and an acceptance of responsibilities. To some degree, a sense of responsibility is no more than an adult expedient—a recognition of the indisputable fact that somebody has to clean up the mess, which serves as a check on youthful impulsiveness. Thus Colonel Ross reflects on his tacit refusal to oust the hopelessly inefficient Colonel Mowbray:

Twenty years ago, Colonel Ross dared say, it would have been his first thought . . . he would act—hew to the line, and let the chips fall where they may! . . . Colonel Ross was not sure whether today's different attitude came from being twenty years wiser or just twenty years older. He had, of course, more knowledge of what happens in the long run. . . . Experience had been busy that much longer rooting out the vestiges of youth's dear and heady hope that thistles can somehow be made to

bear figs . . . In short, the first exhilaration of hewing to the line waned when you had to clean up that mess of chips.

Picking up after Colonel Mowbray is probably better than upsetting the complicated working organization of the air base, and the General, whose chief responsibility is to keep things running smoothly, agrees.

Criticism from the point of view of an abstract justice, or the eternal fitness of things, is a luxury which young men may enjoy but which the man in charge has to forego. District Attorney Martin Bunting tries to make this clear to Abner, who doesn't like to accept office from the Republican boss:

"What right has Jesse to decide who's going to be what? Does he own the country?"

Bunting said, "Standing off and saying you don't like the way things are run is kid stuff—any kid can work out a program of more ice cream and less school and free movies and him telling people what to do instead of people always telling him. . . . If things were run according to your ideas instead of the way they are run, it would be much better. Who says so? Why you say so! . . . Until you have some responsibility, do something besides kick, or try to heave in a few monkey wrenches, you aren't going to know what you're talking about . . . Wait till it's been up to you for a few years, until you've had to decide, until you've seen how a few of those brilliant ideas turn out."

General Beal himself, whose wavering under pressure and final victory over himself constitute the main plot of *Guard of Honor* is an



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interesting combination of youth and age. Chronologically, he is forty—right in the middle. By inclination and temperament, he is on Lieutenant Colonel Carriker's level, and hence an extraordinarily good fighter pilot. His position as general, however, imposes responsibilities which even the fully mature Colonel Ross finds hard to handle. In discharging these responsibilities, General Beal is hampered by "a simple, unlimited integrity that accepted as the law of nature such elevated concepts as the Military Academy's Duty-Honor-Country, convinced that those were the only solid goods; that everyone knew just what the words meant." He is hampered further, since responsibility often demands deviousness and subtlety, by an amiable, boyish honesty and directness:

The strain on General Beal's face increased a little . . . The effect was not the ordinary one of making the young face look older; it made it look younger. The general had the expression of a troubled boy. This was engaging, showing more of the simple-minded integrity; but the virtue graded into the accompanying fault. A more adult way to handle states of personal uncertainty was to crush arguments that might aggravate uncertainty before they were heard. While this made other people angry, it also relieved them of a responsibility which it was not their business to bear.

In the end, the general is restored to an effective authority by the boyish trick of putting himself in danger and proving to himself that he is still as good a flier as Carriker, still

the kind of man his youthful illusions have taught him to admire.

To Cozzens, adult responsibility supplies the answer to the central question: what to do about the sorry condition of man? In a moment of depression, Colonel Ross implies the question:

Life . . . seemed mostly a hard-luck story, very complicated, beginning nowhere and never ending, unclear in theme, and confusing in action . . . The trusting followers of the misjudged easiest way found that way immediately getting hard . . . Conceited men proudly called their shots and proceeded to miss them, without even the comfort of realizing that few attended long enough to notice, and fewer cared . . . The young died and the old married; courageous patience overdid it and missed the boat; good Samaritans, stopping, found it was a trap and lost their shirts, too—everyday incidents in the manifold pouring-past of the Gadereene swine, possessed at someone's whim, but demonstrably innocent—for what was a guilty pig, or a wicked one?—to the appointed steep place. Though so sad, the hard luck often moving, it was a repetitious story, and long; and what did it prove? Let somebody else figure that out!

The young do not have to figure it out. They are protected by their "optimistic insensibility," or by their illusions, from seeing life as a hard-luck story; and "the enthusiasm of their inexperience" sustains them. A few of their elders, like Dr. George Bull, preserve into later life an exuberant vitality, a sheer animal drive,

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which keeps them from asking the question very often. Most middle-aged men are not so fortunate, and the answers given by Cozzens' heroes, clerical and lay alike, boil down to one of those platitudes which contain all there is of wisdom. Colonel Ross gives the fullest statement of the answer:

Granted, the miserable condition of humanity, the corrupted, unsound mind in the unsound body, both unnerved by aging. It remained necessary to make a shift at bearing yourself like a man; not mumping or moping.

Downheartedness was no man's part. A man must stand up and do the best he can with what there is. If mind failed you, seeing no pattern; and heart failed you, seeing no point, the stout, stubborn will must be up and doing. A pattern should be found; a point should be imposed. Was that too much?

It was not. This discovery wasn't new. What to do about it exercised the best minds of sixty centuries; and . . . their highly recommended procedures afforded you a good selection; you had

only to suit your taste and temperament. Once you knew you needed something to keep you operative, playing the man, you could be of good heart. Your need would find it for you, and adapt it to you, and even support you in it.

The virtues of maturity as depicted by Cozzens have a kind of sober chilliness about them, and Colonel Ross notes ruefully that the counsels of wisdom always seem to recommend the course to which an old man's lower spirits and failing forces incline him anyway. The Cozzens heroes are not heroic in any ideal sense. In fact, the author seems to go out of his way, by dwelling on their limitations, to cut them down to life size. But perhaps for this very reason they carry the impact of reality. Middle-aged and unromantic, they are admirable because they have accepted the obligations of maturity: having found some faith to keep them operative, they stand up and do the best they can with what there is.

## *The Incorruptibles*

CLINTON WILLIAMS

Stained stone or mildewed bronze, they stand  
beneath an overarch of sky  
in countless city-squares, remind  
the many of the few who die.

Remind the neon clocks that sand  
trickles at a steady rate  
between the fingers, flesh or glass,  
never quite articulate.

Remind blind flux and grind of cars  
that green yet flashes after red,  
and hurry fails to overtake  
the impervious dead.

Remind the cash-and-carry crowds  
that credit is new-minted by  
iconoclasts in stone or bronze  
to seeing eyes.

These incorruptible in stone  
alive denied the pieties  
of clocks, cars, crowds. Dead, they atone—  
unheeded deities.

# THE RIVALS

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*by Betty Sue Davidson*

DENNIE, the hotel furnace-and-incinerator man, was in the elevator when it opened for Agnes on the second floor. The expression on his face warned her that he was as usual all set to talk her ear off, and she determined to make short work of him. She had spent a miserable night in which dreams of Mr. Stanley coming back from St. Louis had been broken by the wide-awake realization that he was gone for good; at daybreak her head felt as though it had been pounded against a wall. So when Dennie leaned sociably out of the cage with his stupid, "How's every little thing, Agnes?" she did not answer, but merely lifted her pail across the sill and said, "Punch five for me."

"You look a little tuckered today, Agnes," Dennie said. "Rheumatism bothering you again? Or was you just out too late last night to one of them night clubs?" He laughed loudly.

Agnes stared stonily at the iron lace of the elevator door, but Dennie did not give up. "Oh, you women," he said. "Does a woman ever sleep? Has all of 'em got something to worry over every night?"

"I told you punch five for me, I believe."

Dennie pushed the button and the outer door slid closed. "Birdie looks something awful this morning, too," he said. "Saw her a while ago in the lobby. Her eyes're red as fire."

Agnes' whole body stiffened. "You don't say?"

"Yeah. Red as fire. Poor little old Birdie. Musta been crying all night."

"Is that so?" Agnes said. "What do you suppose is wrong with her? What could Birdie have so particular to be crying about?"

"Oh, you know!" Dennie winked, happy in the response he had drawn. "That Stanley boy she's so crazy about, leaving. You'd of thought he was a relation."

Agnes laughed, shaking her head in broad amusement. "Oh, my, Dennie, I'm afraid you're mistaken. Birdie certainly can't be



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crying about that! Heavens! Birdie didn't hardly know Mr. Stanley. I'm sure he never even so much as spoke to her more than two or three times."

"Well, she sure is mourning, that much I know. And she said it's on account of that boy going off to St. Louis. I told her plenty of other men in the hotel, and she should pick on somebody her own age." Dennie showed his yellow teeth in a wide grin. "It ain't natural for her to carry on so."

"No," Agnes said, "it's not natural at all to carry on over a perfect stranger. Not unless they was really friends, which they wasn't. It'd be different for a real friend of his."

The elevator bumped to a standstill. Agnes picked up her mop and pail. "Move out of the way, Dennie."

"All right. I got to go up to seven, anyways. You try to cheer Birdie up, why don't you, Agnes? You and her being friends, you should be able to do something."

"I can't do anything about somebody who's crazy, can I?"

"Oh, Birdie ain't crazy—just chicken-hearted," Dennie said, and slammed the elevator door.

Agnes was trembling as she walked down the hall. It was an insult to a man like Mr. Stanley, she thought, that Birdie, behind his back, should pretend she had a right to cry for him. Only a cracked old woman could mourn over a man who hadn't even known she was alive. Agnes herself had suggested to Mr. Stanley that it would be cheaper than the laundry to have Birdie wash his things; and this was how he thought of Birdie, simply as the old woman who washed his clothes.

If Birdie had half a brain in her head, she would have realized from the start that Mr. Stanley had exchanged a few words with her only because he was too polite to ignore her when she tried to drag him into conversations. A man like Mr. Stanley could not possibly find anything interesting in Birdie. They had nothing in common. Birdie had never been anywhere, never done anything, never known anyone. She had lived all her life in this very same neighborhood, and had always worked at cheesy old apartment buildings and hotels as bad as this one. The very fact that she thought it was so wonder-

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ful to have her own room on the basement floor, next door to Agnes, proved that Birdie had not had so much as a glimpse of the better things in life.

Agnes turned the key in the lock, and then, as she did every morning, pushed the door wide open with her foot. It was not until she was well into the room that she missed his pipe rack on the bureau, his girlie calendar on the wall, his six books piled up under the night table. It hit her so hard that she sat down on the bed, clutching her mop handle like a staff and leaning heavily upon it.

"Oh, Stanley," she said aloud, "Mr. Stanley!"

Her glance went about the room again, carefully, noting all the changes made by his absence. The bathroom door was open, and she saw that the new roomer had left its hook bare, preferring to fold his pajamas primly away on the shelf. Mr. Stanley's habit was to drape his soiled clothing on the hook, night after night, until there were so many undershirts, shirts, shorts, pajamas on that one hook that they began to fall to the floor each time the door was opened or closed. Then he would gather them all up, add them to the pile of socks he kept in his closet, and give them to Birdie to wash. He told Agnes not to bother with sweeping in the closet, since his socks took up the floor of it. It was not his fault there was nowhere else to put them; the hotel manager had ignored his requests for a clothes hamper.

Now Agnes saw that the new roomer had made his own bed this morning; and she marked him off, whatever his name was, as some farmer boy, or some poor trash who was unused to having someone to do for him. Mr. Stanley never made the bed, not even on Sundays when the maids didn't come to clean. Very often he was still in bed at ten o'clock, the hour Agnes got to his room. That was how she had first become acquainted with him. About three days after he moved in, she'd entered the room as usual; and, seeing the paper shade of the single window drawn down, and the long shape under the covers, she had started to go back out. But Mr. Stanley had said, "That's O.K., come on in. I'm awake."

From that time on, as soon as she arrived he would get out of bed. In his striped silk pajamas, he would cross to the bathroom,

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excusing himself, and close the door. After a while he always opened the door and talked to her as he shaved. The first few weeks he told her about his life before he had come here, about the beautiful fifteen-room house his parents owned in Edinburg, Indiana, about being a major in the Army, and how he was putting himself through the School of Optometry on government funds, instead of accepting from his parents the money that could have made his life more comfortable.

"They think it's terrible, me living in a place like this after what I'm accustomed to," he told Agnes. "And not that I like it, you understand, Agnes, but I should of insisted on making my own way in the world years ago. I didn't realize how important all that was until I was a major in the Army, with all that responsibility."

Agnes understood just how he felt; and didn't she know what it was to go from riches to rags? She told him how she had been employed by the finest families in L.A. during her three years on the Coast. She had worked longest for Cecil B. De Mille; and sometimes when they gave really big parties, they'd have her come in at night to help out in the kitchen.

"Oh, them were parties, believe me!" she said to Stanley, leaning against the bathroom door and pushing the hair off her dampened forehead. Stanley, his shaving done, would offer Agnes a cigarette from the loose ones he kept in the pocket of his pajama top; and they would smoke as they chatted. He was elegant in the striped pajamas, a towel draped carelessly about his neck. Once in a while his shaving caused a pimple on his full cheeks to bleed; and there was something devil-may-care about the patch of toilet paper sticking against his face and moving on his jaw as he talked. He had a tiny red mouth which he wetted constantly with his tongue; it shone in the light of the electric bulb over the sink.

"But I had to give it all up," Agnes told him. "Just like you giving up your commission and your people's house and all, I had to leave the Coast. My Daddy was sick here in Chicago—he was old, nearly eighty, and he needed me, so there it was."

"That's the way it goes," Stanley had said. "I have a friend in Hollywood, makes movies. He wants me to come out, give me an

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easy berth. But, God, you got to settle down to something—you can't run around for the rest of a man's life."

Later, when she knew all there was to know of the past events of his career, he began to tell her something of his present life. He had a hard lot of it, studying long hours, and having very little time or money for recreation. That was why he happened to oversleep sometimes. He would study at the School of Optometry Library until about midnight, and then go to meet the girl he was in love with. His girl was very smart and educated, he told Agnes; she was a dietitian at a restaurant downtown. The restaurant didn't close until midnight, and the only chance Stanley had to be with her was early in the morning. He was often sad because he didn't have enough money to buy her presents or to take her to nice places; and once in a while Agnes lent him a few dollars. She would have been glad for him to keep the money; but he nearly always paid it back, except for the twenty-five dollars he still owed her when he left yesterday. He was going to send it to her as soon as he got settled in St. Louis. He wanted Agnes to meet his girl; they had tried to arrange it several times; but each time, for one reason or another, their plans had fallen through.

In the beginning, Birdie had said that Mr. Stanley hadn't a steady girl at all, that she'd heard him talking to at least three different girls over the telephone in the hall. It was Birdie, too, who said that Mr. Stanley did not go to any School of Optometry, but only worked in a place where eyeglasses were made. She claimed that she had learned this from a friend who called on Mr. Stanley once when he was out. But all this was before Birdie began to like Mr. Stanley, before he asked her to handle his laundry. Once Birdie had met him, she was all for him, and talked about the School of Optometry just as though she had gone there herself.

Agnes went into the bathroom, dragging her mop; and when she saw the shelf under the mirror, empty of his bottles of hair lotion and men's talc, and the jar of salve he used for his complexion, she could not keep back the tears. She scoured the tub and the sink quickly, dusted the bedroom furniture with a few flicks of her rag, and hurried into the room next door. Once inside it, although she



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was already behind schedule, she gave herself a full ten minutes to calm down while she smoked a cigarette. She had had him for eight months, she reasoned with herself, and everything happy must end sometime. There was no use hanging around his former room and crying, even though she, unlike Birdie, had a right to do that very thing.

"That old fool!" she whispered as she puffed at the cigarette. Then she smiled faintly. At least, she thought, she and Mr. Stanley would have a good laugh when she described to him how Birdie had been carrying on.

But as she put her cigarette out slowly against the rusted tin ash tray, she knew that it might be a long time before she joked with Mr. Stanley, maybe never. The days stretched away before her, a series of waiting, disheveled rooms, all of them empty so far as she was concerned. Nighttime at the end of them was empty, too, empty of anything to recall from the day.

On her knees in the bathroom she decided she would have Birdie in for coffee after supper.

By the time she had finished cleaning the last room on her schedule, she was so tired that the thought of preparing supper made her head ache. Standing by the sink in the kitchen, she ate a bread-and-butter sandwich. Then she turned the gas on under the coffeepot and went to tap on Birdie's door.

Birdie's face shone. "Oh, yes, yes, Agnes, I'd love some coffee," she said, running to snatch her key off the bureau before she followed Agnes down the hall. "I ain't fixed any yet, and besides, I was just as lonely tonight, I didn't know what to do with myself!"

"Well, sit right down, Birdie, and I'll pour you a cup. Have a cookie, too." Agnes poured the coffee and seated herself opposite Birdie. "I'm so wore out I didn't want any supper, what with all the packing I did for Stanley the past few days. I said to him when he began with all them clothes of his, look, Stanley dear, you haven't no idea how to pack a suitcase, let me do it. And he said, well, I guess you've done more traveling than me, Agnes—so I done it for him."

She watched Birdie taking a bite of fig newton, chewing with

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difficulty because of her bad teeth. Birdie's shrunken little head was protected by only a few wisps of gray hair, gathered together in the back into a small lump. She needed glasses as badly as she needed teeth; her faded eyes looked at everything hesitantly, almost in fright, because she was never really sure whether she had identified correctly the shapes of objects or the expressions on the faces of people. But she was not afraid of Agnes, and her unexpectedly deep voice was confident when she spoke to her.

"He is a sly one, isn't he, always getting people to do things for him, but you don't mind. I told him I spent as much time sewing on buttons as I did washing clothes, and he just laughed and said, well, Blue-Birdie, you don't have to do it if you don't want."

Agnes cleared her throat. "He said he certainly would bring his people in to meet me when they're all in Chicago sometime—said we'd all go out to lunch or something. His people are awful snobs, he said, but they can't help it, being what they are."

"Oh, he does miss his mother so," Birdie said. She glanced up at Agnes, and her face looked as though it would be blushing, were it not that the color had long ago stopped going to her cheeks. "He said I reminded him of her."

Agnes laughed. "Oh, Birdie, come on now. He showed me pictures of his whole family. You're no more like his mother than I'm like Shirley Temple."

"That doesn't mean nothing," Birdie said. "The looks don't mean nothing. What he meant was the way I acted, or maybe it was the way—"

"Birdie!" Agnes said. "Oh, Birdie, you kill me! I can just see Mr. Stanley's mother washing a window—in an outfit like yours, too!"

"Anyway, he said it. I don't know what kind of way he meant I was like her, but he said it."

They were silent for a while, sipping their coffee, Birdie staring off into space, Agnes' eyes following the pattern of old stains on the wooden table top. It was chilly in the damp basement kitchen. Agnes shivered and picked up the coffeepot.

"A little more hot, Birdie?" she said. Birdie nodded, and Agnes

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got up to pour the coffee for her, looking down at the scalp between the wisps of Birdie's hair. "You do kill me, Birdie," she said.

Birdie did not seem to hear her. "I wonder has he got to St. Louis yet, Agnes?" she said.

Agnes dropped abruptly into her chair. "Got there yet—*got* there yet? Birdie, my land, he left here yesterday and it's only five hours on the train to St. Louis. Of course he's got there!"

"Oh, well, that's good. I didn't think to ask him how long it took. If it's such a short trip, I guess he can wear that white shirt another time. He said it was done up so beautiful he hated to spoil it with putting it on!" Birdie's eyes filled with tears. "I tell you, Agnes, I just been so blue all day, thinking of him. It's so hard knowing he ain't coming back here."

Agnes burned her tongue on the coffee. Her heart began to pound heavily at the sight of the tears in Birdie's eyes. "I know he sure did like the way you done up his shirts, Birdie," she said. "He used to say to me—that washwoman sure can iron a shirt." She watched Birdie closely.

Birdie's fingers tightened over the edge of the table. "Oh, Agnes," she said, "I'm sure he didn't call me 'that washwoman,' because—"

"Well," Agnes said, "I guess he just couldn't remember your name, that's all. What's so funny in that?"

"Oh, I know he didn't call me that—he knew my name. He called me Blue-Birdie sometimes to tease me, he knew my name that well."

"Well, all I know, of course, is he didn't ever call you Birdie to me."

"Well," Birdie said, "there wasn't no reason for him to call me Birdie to you." Her voice trembled, but she looked straight into Agnes' eyes.

Suddenly Agnes smiled. She leaned forward a little. "What did he give *you*, Birdie?" she said.

Birdie stared at her.

"I said, what did he give you?"

"What," Birdie said, "what do you mean, give me?"

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"What did he give you's what I mean. You know—keepsake, good-bye present."

Birdie's fingers jerked at the neck of her dress. She brought the hand up to shade her eyes, as though the light were painful to them. "Why," she said, "why—"

"Didn't he give you nothing, Birdie—friends like you? You mean to say he didn't give you nothing at all?"

Birdie's glance dropped from Agnes to the table. She shook her head slowly.

"That's funny," Agnes said. "That's funny, because—" She had to stop for a moment, her breath was coming so fast. "Didn't I show you what he gave me? It's funny I didn't think of it right away, because I meant to show you first thing. I'll go get it."

She did not wait for Birdie to say anything. She went quickly into the bedroom and pulled open the bottom drawer of her dresser. In a corner under an old sweater was a small pasteboard box with a brass lock. Agnes pulled it out and then opened another drawer. From a rolled-up pair of stockings she extracted a small brass key.

This was the one thing Birdie did not know about. She and Birdie, when they first became friends, had shown one another everything they owned. Birdie had seen the hand-embroidered kimono from the Chicago World's Fair, given Agnes by her daddy; she had seen the rock-coral picture from the last family Agnes worked for in L.A.; she knew that Agnes herself had bought the perfume tray with the fancy bottles. But Agnes had never shown her the locket, partly because it was mother-of-pearl, valuable, and Birdie was often alone in Agnes' rooms. But partly, too, because she had not wanted to show it to anyone.

She held the locket in her hand for a moment, letting the light gleam in its luster. It was a long time, a long time ago, that the locket had been given to her. She had been almost young then; and she would have liked it better if the locket had been given to her after she had known the man for maybe a month—just as a gift to show his affection, after knowing him maybe a month. But he had put the locket on her dresser the very next morning, and then he had gone away. She did not hear from him again.



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She went into the kitchen. Birdie had not moved, and she did not look up when she heard Agnes' footsteps.

Agnes went up close to Birdie and opened her hand with the locket in it under Birdie's face. "Look," she said, "he gave me this. Beautiful, isn't it?"

Birdie seemed to be searching for her coffee cup. Her hand wandered over the table.

"Don't you like it, Birdie? Don't you think he's got good taste, though?"

"Yes," Birdie said. Her voice was a whisper. "Oh, yes, very beautiful." She rose from the table, helping herself up with her hands.

"Well, don't run off now, Birdie. It's not so late." Agnes put her hand on Birdie's arm.

"But I'm tired, Agnes, I'm tired," Birdie said. "I'd like to stay and see the locket some more, but I'm tired."

Agnes followed Birdie to the door. She watched the stoop of Birdie's shoulders and the way Birdie felt along the wall to her room. She watched her fumbling at her door, her head bent down.

"Can I help you, Birdie?" she called.

Birdie struggled with the key, jabbing it at the door. But when, at last, the key went in, she stood there with her hand on the knob, as though she could not remember where she was, or what she had been about to do.

"Can I help you, Birdie?" Agnes called; and Birdie pushed the door open and went into her room.

Agnes did not bother to wash the coffee cups. Tonight she did not put cold cream on her face or brush her hair, but went directly to bed. Stretched out full length, she felt that she had never rested until this moment.

As her eyes closed, she remembered the locket lying unprotected on the kitchen table, and she half raised herself upon her elbow. Then the elbow collapsed; she lay back once more against the pillows.

It could wait until morning.

# ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND

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*by Frank Jones*

**I**N 1950, my thirty-fifth year, life began to make sense to me. I saw that it is worth living if you have one freedom: the freedom to complain. A society which allows this freedom to be practiced with impunity is not only worth living in, but worth dying for, since life is valueless on any other terms.

This is nothing new, I know; but there are times when the obvious is very hard to see. Such a time, for me, was adolescence. I use the term as the ancient Romans did. They called any man under thirty an adolescent, and did not consider themselves *juvenes*, men in the vigor of adulthood, until they were thirty-five or forty. In 1950, then, my adolescence came to an end. It began in 1929, with the onset of the world economic crisis and the onslaught of puberty. For twenty-one years after that, I complained. Like many who came to political consciousness when there were bread lines in their countries and Five-Year Plans in Russia, I would willingly have exchanged my freedom to complain for anything that eliminated the causes of complaint. Five years of depression, five years of fear of war, six years of war, five years of fear of war: this was the history of my generation, and it often seemed useless to be alive. A poem I wrote in 1940 contained these lines:

We can no longer live  
Under the lying moon  
If God's scythe cut not down  
What she looks upon.

And this was its refrain:

Secret shall no man have  
Common shall he live soon.

But when war broke out in Korea in 1950, I stopped complaining. I was willing to defend my freedom to complain against any attempt to take it away from me, no matter what was offered in re-

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## *An Experiment in Political Self-Analysis*

turn. Existence had come to have that much point, and that was enough.

Having acquired the habit of self-scrutiny during adolescence, I asked myself what the reasons might be for this extraordinary change of attitude. Two possible wrong reasons at once suggested themselves. For one thing, I might simply have been stunned into submission by the course of events, as a man ceases, after a time, to complain of street noises, or the loudness of his neighbor's radio. Or, since I was no longer of draft age, at least under the law which went into effect in July 1950, I might be in the well-known, well-hated position of the cheering civilian on the sidelines. After all, I had, at the moment, less to lose from this war than when I was conscripted seven years before and almost at once, much to my surprise, found myself in training as an infantry machine gunner. This time, I might stand a better chance of getting a desk job if the Army got me again, or even sit out the war at home. The latter might well be worse than the Army when the bombs began to fall, but at least, I told myself, those who stay at home die in their own beds, or near them. So, with little or no forced military discomfort in view, why not stop complaining?

The answer to this was easy. I found myself ready to undergo any such discomfort, in fact anything at all, rather than accept Communist conquest of any territory in spheres of American or West European influence. This had certainly not been my feeling in 1939, when it looked as though Europe might be divided between Stalin and Hitler. I was sure then that the two of them would fall out eventually, or that Hitler would be overthrown by European resistance, without my help. In 1941, Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union made it seem to me even more likely that he would be defeated without American intervention, and I thought that if Stalin replaced him in Europe this would at least mean the substitution of a rational state of things for an aberration of nationalism. Even

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during the postwar crisis over the Soviet blockade of Berlin, I had not felt that America should defend her position there by force of arms. Yet now, with our tanks and planes and men pouring into "a distant country of which we know little," as Chamberlain had said of Czechoslovakia in 1938, and despite complaints, even in conservative newspapers, about the corruption and general rottenness of the state we were rushing to protect (as "decadent" France had been mocked in 1940 to justify the contrary procedure)—in this sorry mess I was not among the objectors, but wholeheartedly in favor of intervention, even if it involved me in a third World War.

So I dismissed one wrong reason for ceasing to complain. But did not that dismissal tend to confirm the other wrong reason—that I had stopped complaining because I had stopped resisting, stopped believing that there could be another life for my generation than one of conflict and destruction? An accuser said within me: "You were a fighter once, although your belligerence went no further in practice than joining Left Wing drama groups. You once thought that capitalism, which can cure depressions only by wars, was iniquitous and ought to be destroyed, with or without the help of the Soviet Union, but certainly not against it. You were sympathetic to the Popular Front movements of the 'thirties, and felt guilty about not taking part in the civil war in Spain. But that's all over now. Middle age is creeping up; negative adaptation is setting in. You've acquired a wife and family and survived one war, and you're still solvent in spite of the inflation. What's another war to you? If it wrecks the Socialist Fatherland (remember when they called Russia that?), it's no skin off your nose. If it wrecks everybody's fatherland, there goes everybody's nose. If it wrecks everything but the Socialist Fatherland, there's always cyanide or a fate worse than death. Meanwhile, your bread is buttered, so you'll go along. Stalin's a nuisance now: he's smashed the even tenor of your existence, as Hitler did; so you'll join his other enemies and swallow all their reasons for eliminating him."

The charge was damaging, I had to admit. How often, during the postwar, prewar years, had movements like Wallaceism re-



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minded me of episodes in my own past! How often had I been shocked to find myself on the verge of agreeing with the very people who had laughed at my youthful views! Little incidents kept coming to mind. The way I had writhed in 1933 when a woman I knew fired this question at a Socialist lecturer: "Have you ever brought up a child in Russia?" She had never been out of her home state. And how I squirmed in 1937, when a Babbittish acquaintance countered my complaints about Hitler with the casual comment, "Oh, but Fascism's better than Communism," as though that settled the matter. Even after 1945 I kept right on wincing when people said, "We'll have to fight Russia next." It seemed fantastic. What was the sense in nearly ruining three nations with another nation's help and then turning on the helper? Was there any more consistency or integrity in such a policy than in those of Britain and France toward Mussolini and Hitler and Franco? Less, it seemed. Well, maybe everything was a senseless mess: complaint was futile, and revolution only made it worse. Anyhow, war was endemic to organized society. It always had been and always would be. The Communist argument that only capitalism causes war in our time was patently absurd. Pacifism made some sense, but not enough. How, in reason, can you abstain from war without abstaining from society, or, in justice, accept all the benefits afforded by a polity without assuming all its burdens?

I was simply tired, then. That was why I had stopped complaining. A tired liberal is the reactionary's best friend, as the dog is of man. The eighteenth-century liberal said, "I disagree with everything you say, but I'll fight to the death for your right to say it." The twentieth-century, end-of-the-road liberal says, "I disagree with everything you say. Leave me alone."

A depressing conclusion, and perhaps a true one. Yet it was just after the outbreak of war in Korea that these lines had come into my mind:

I complain and complain and complain,  
And you tell me life is sad.  
This I knew already.  
Is this the sum of your wisdom?

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And now my self-scrutiny was suggesting reasons other than defeatism for accepting war against ideas I had formerly favored. The chief reason was that, for all its defects, the anti-Communist world was partly on the side of the right to complain, whereas the Communist world was entirely opposed to it. In fact, it was out to destroy that right, not merely to tamper with it, as some misguided people on our side had been doing. The pattern of destruction was simple and uniform: eliminate some of the causes of complaint, substitute others, and murder the complainers. Clearly, then, the situation was one of tyranny *versus* freedom—a new form of tyranny against a freedom not widely cherished in the world, but the old story all the same. If tyranny lost, the passing corruptions and lasting liberties of republicanism would probably survive. If it won, the permanent corruption of autocracy would envelop the world.

These were bromides, of course—contemptibly familiar ones, at that. “Freedom? Freedom to sleep under bridges and go hungry?” But to me in 1950 even that freedom seemed preferable to forcible feeding with revolutionary slogans, vomiting to be punished by death. True, bread went along with the slogans, and the providers of both commodities seemed to be curing much that had caused the complaints of my adolescence. But what a cure! When the Soviet doctors accused us of literally spreading the disease, by dropping pests from airplanes onto East German potato fields, I began to suspect that their cure for starvation entailed the removal of the brain, and that they had pretested it on themselves. They said that capitalism had no remedy for the disease and could only complicate it by war. But war was only idiot’s delight, not idiocy itself; nor did it necessarily doom civilization to a dead level of mediocrity forever. “And this is your world!” as Goethe’s Faust exclaimed, in disgust with an earlier mental prison; “This you call a world!” (André Gide had seen all that in 1936, but his adolescence was over by then.)

And now other memories began to crowd into my brain, which was still there, so far as I knew. Among the scenes I saw again were the Russian and German pavilions at the Paris Exposition of 1937. Glaring at each other across an avenue, colossal statues of Soviet

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workers, male and female, draped, and of German youth, male and female, undraped, guarded the massive structures. It was said that year that Parisians used the salient rump of German Womanhood as a landmark for assignations. Would she have appealed to Baudelaire, I wondered—that dreamer about youthful giantesses? And I remembered the Hitler Youth laddie in the Bavarian youth hostel in 1934, insisting that in speaking to him I use not the formal pronoun *Sie* but the intimate pronoun *Du*, because he was Folk and I was Folk and everybody was Folk together, Heaven help us all. And the elderly American lady, that same summer, in the hotel in Munich. On the wall opposite her table in the dining room hung a large photograph of Hitler. Sitting there alone one evening, she suddenly burst out: “That face! That face! I can’t stand it any more! Bismarck at least looked educated, but that face! That stupid face!” A waiter, who was listening in shocked silence, told me afterward that he had reported her remarks to the police and he hoped that she would be arrested. And I recalled, too, how I had been struck by the opening sentences of H. A. L. Fisher’s *History of Europe* when it appeared in 1935: “I begin this book with neolithic man and conclude with Stalin and Mustapha Kemal, Mussolini and Hitler. Between these rough and rugged frontiers there are to be found some prospects flattering to human pride . . .” What a juxtaposition!

But my keenest, most stabbing recollections in 1950 were of the Initiates. They had made me writhe and wince and smart more often than all the others put together. They knew so much more than anyone else, and I found it so tiring to try to acquire their knowledge: Surplus Value, Contradictions of Capitalism, Coming Struggle for Power, Socialist Realism . . . This last I thought I understood: it was a literary movement, and in 1936 I wrote a paper purporting to show that it was neither socialist nor realism. But the basic ideas that underlay such movements continued to baffle me, and this was very embarrassing in political discussions. When Russia invaded Finland in 1939, for example, I was at a loss to understand, let alone answer, the Initiates’ claim that Finland had it coming because she was behindhand in sociohistorical development.

## ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND THE BURIED PAST

When Russia made an alliance with Germany shortly afterward, I was not sure that even they understood their arguments in favor of that. How, then, could I hope to? And so it went: I stumbled from problem to problem, from crisis to crisis, in bleak incomprehension of what it all meant to these philosophers. Their views did afford me an occasional flash of insight into ancient history, but the present and the future remained as dark as ever. Demosthenes, I discovered, was being a chauvinist reactionary when he urged the Athenians to take up arms against Philip of Macedon in the fourth century B.C.; but that did not help me to realize why the British were wrong in resisting Hitler in 1940. I was tongue-tied in 1945, too, when the Initiates declared that Western Europe had no right to form a bloc to block the Russians' bloc in Eastern Europe; and 1949 found me speechless again when they asserted not only that Chiang Kai-shek deserved to be overthrown by the Chinese Communists, but that the United States, after supporting him for years, ought to delight in his downfall. It was true that I had managed to open my mouth, once. That was in 1937, during the Soviet treason trials. "My Russia, right or wrong!" I broke out. This was meant as an ironic allusion to the Initiates' approval of the purges, but none of them were present when I made the remark. The whole record of my relations with this school of thought was like a long gash in my self-esteem.

But now my humiliation was charmed away by malice: If the war in Korea became a general conflict, the Initiates would have to put up or shut up if they wanted to stay out of jail, where few of them, I thought, would have the guts to go. "Perfect hate casteth out fear," as that great Victorian, Samuel Butler, had observed. At any rate, it was no longer necessary to argue with those opponents, or, indeed, with anybody. I had never been good at arguing, except with myself. Now it was necessary only to remember—this was becoming a pleasure—and to decide. Even decision was simple, since there was only one enemy, a single force to resist. Thus I gradually arrived at what seemed to be not only good reasons for ceasing to complain, but good reasons for being alive. These reasons I formulated as follows. (Let the reader be reminded that I am



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trying simply to describe and explain my feelings, not to justify them.)

“On the enemy’s side are unity, security, order, and the right to be and the duty to obey a certain brand of socialist. We uphold the right to be anything but that brand of socialist, and the duty to obey nothing but the law. Also on our side are disunity, insecurity, and disorder. We have not cured them. They cannot be cured without the right to complain and the possibility of change. These, too, are on our side, along with a good deal of frivolity and decadence. The enemy solemnly confronts this lack of system with the most formidable apparatus yet devised to sweep it away. That challenge is probably the last of its kind we shall have to face in what remains of this century. Some say that it leaves us with only two choices: to go down fighting, and to go down without fighting. Is it not possible that either alternative would be better than going to the devil?”

*It is bad for a soul to cease to expect  
grapes from a thistle.*

—MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

# MUSIC INTO SILENCE

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by *Lawrence Clark Powell*

WHEN I WAS A BOY our cook was a Russian woman, not well educated, but passionate about music; and so whenever a Russian musician came to town my mother bought her a concert ticket and one for me, too, because Cook and I were pals.

One night we went to hear Rachmaninoff. I must have been about twelve and had just succeeded in whipping the C sharp minor prelude in recital. We had the best keyboard seats in the orchestra, and Cook was so excited that she kept talking to herself in Russian—somewhat to my embarrassment, for the genteel folk around us showed their breeding by turning to stare, arch their brows, and titter into gloves and handkerchiefs.

When Rachmaninoff came on stage, bowed once from the waist like a soldier, then swept up his tails and began to play, I forgot my embarrassment. I had never heard anything like it, nor seen a man's hands move so fast. More than the music, I remember Cook's enraptured attention throughout the recital. Her lips moved soundlessly now and tears welled from her eyes. Through her I heard the music; from her I learned for the first time the emotional power of great music greatly played.

Sight of the program kept all these years reminds me of the evening's two main morsels: Moussorgsky's "Pictures" and Liszt's "B Minor Sonata"; two monuments of piano rhetoric, subsequently dynamited by such keyboard wreckers as Rubenstein and Horowitz, those muscle men whose flagrant *rubati* should have brought them long sentences.

It was one of the unlisted encores—not *the* prelude—played by Rachmaninoff that night which became a part of my subconscious assets, forgotten for the next fifteen years, as was indeed the recital itself, until I heard him play it again, far from home, alone in a foreign country; and the simple melody and rhythm of his own

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"Serenade" affected me then in the way Lawrence writes of in the poem called "Piano":

. . . The glamour  
of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast  
Down in the flood of remembrance. I weep like a child for the past.

Rachmaninoff played that night in the Casino at Nice. I went by bus the eight miles from the fishing village, wearing my blue corduroy suit and new *espadrilles* on my calloused feet; and I bought the cheapest of all tickets, which entitled me to standing room at the back of the hall. He was older, thinner, grayer, but once again he bowed from the waist, tossed his tails over the stool, and cast his spell over a cosmopolitan audience. He played Schumann, Chopin, and the wonderful Liszt "Sonnetto del Petrarca"; and last of all, the wistful little "Serenade," which made me cry. Cook was long since dead; my thermometer of love depressed; the economic barometer low. Music comes alive, Nietzsche said, when for the first time we hear in it the voice of our past; and that night I knew it to be true.

What did the future hold for me, composer *manqué*, poetaster, unpublished *prosateur*? I walked the eight miles home, guided by the flashing light on Cape Antibes, and fell into bed, emotionally spent, physically exhausted. And woke purged and refreshed. For by great art we live and die and are born again.

Years passed.

Rachmaninoff died in Beverly Hills during the war. I never knew he was living there until the news of his death was in the paper. A week later there was a memorial concert on the radio. A mezzo-soprano sang songs he was said to have composed for her long ago in Russia when they were lovers—"The Nightingale" and "O Cease Thy Singing Maiden Fair." And as she sang, Yeats's lines were singing in my mind:

That we descant and yet again descant  
Upon the supreme theme of Art and Song;  
Bodily decrepitude is wisdom; young  
We-loved each other and were ignorant.

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### II

Looking back from the plateau of middle age I can see the stages of my musical development, from childhood delight in the new Victrola, to learning to play the piano and then the woodwinds, followed by the feverish, sterile years of dance music for college proms, on shipboard, in mountain lodge and night club; and then an emotional wakening to symphonic music, study of pipe organ; and finally the glorious peaks of memorable concerts heard in the musical centers of Europe and America.

It was during my last year in college that I first became aware of the depths and heights of my own emotional response to life. Perhaps it was because I had met the girl I was eventually to marry; or it may also have been the stimulation of two college professors, C. F. MacIntyre and B. F. Stelter, who first made poetry live for me; or the flowering of friendship with Monk and Richman. For whatever reasons, my personal renaissance came as I entered my twenties.

I wanted to play music, hear music, read music itself, and read about its composers. I took Rolland's three-volume *Jean-Christophe* in one gulp. Beethoven was my god, and I wrote bad poetry in his praise. I devoured Weingartner's treatise on his symphonies. The great odd-numbered symphonies—*Third, Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth*—I acquired on records, and I wore the records scratchy. I formed the conviction then, which has never left me, that of all man's creations music is the most nearly divine.

The climax of my symphonic experience of Beethoven—I did not arrive at his quartets until I was in my thirties—was a concert in Paris, at which the *Ninth Symphony* was preceded by Mozart's *Requiem*. It was my first winter in Europe. I was alone. To be alone in Paris after having been there with a beloved was also a passionate experience. The great river-souled city of stone and light was still humming with the echoes of desire.

Libraries in the mornings and early afternoons, pilgrimages to the monuments for César Franck and Claude Debussy, cafés until dinner, concerts in the evening, followed by exalted walks home alone in the midst of crowds—what a regime!



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It culminated the night Weingartner conducted a Mozart-Beethoven double bill in the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt. For once I had a good seat: first row in the balcony where I could pillow head on arms. It was my first symphony concert outside the Western provinces. Back home I had disliked the "subscription series" audiences, composed of dowagers and old-maid schoolteachers, whispery and bored, or timidly responsive.

The Parisian audience was the musical elite of the world's capital, and I was thrilled as much by its glitter and beauty and intentness as I was by the incomparable playing of the huge orchestra under Weingartner. It was my first hearing of the *Requiem*, that swan song from the composer's deathbed; and I remembered the story of how Mozart asked for the unfinished score, silently sang a few bars, then wept—and was dead before dawn.

At the intermission I sat bemused and let the *Requiem* ring in my ears. My eyes roved the theater, imagining rendezvous with the beautiful creatures I saw there. All of this from the exalted, yet impersonal state to which Mozart had transported me. Although I have never been in Vienna I have a photograph of the "Mozart-brunnen," that bronze fountain-statue which represents the composer playing the *zauberflute*, held tenderly by his adoring muse.

The musicians and the singers returned to the stage and Weingartner launched the *Ninth*. I thought I knew it by heart, had heard it out. I was wrong. The German conductor made it new for me. By the end of the choral movement I was crying from the joy of it.

I had never heard such an ovation. At home only the topmost gallery cried "Bravo!" Here the entire audience roared its approval, and I experienced union with them, with the performers, with Beethoven! In a trance I left the Théâtre and moved with the throng, coming to rest finally at a table in a sidewalk café, close to a charcoal brazier. There I bought a cornucopia of roasted chestnuts, and shelled and munched the rich meats, wet down with a glass of tawny port.

Toward midnight I went back to the Left Bank and ate a snack of bread and Gruyère, then sought to memorialize my emotions in a letter to Hal. I had never been so long in such a state of serenity,

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wherein all was clear, calm, and reconciled. "Wem sich mein Musik verständlich macht, er ist allen Jammer der Welt erhaben," Beethoven once said to a disciple; and on that cold winter night in Paris, alone but not lonely, my heart singing with music, I knew what he had meant: *He to whom my music makes itself understood is uplifted above all the sorrows of the world.* Verily!

### III

The Weingartner concert was neither my first nor last great musical experience in Paris. Soon after I arrived on the banks of the Seine I went alone to the Opéra Comique to hear *Carmen*. So unconfident was I of my spoken French, when my place in the long line brought me to the ticket window, that I pushed in a slip of paper on which I had written "*un billet pour ce soir s'il vous plait.*" With no expression at all on his sloe-eyed face the man inside the window pushed a ticket toward me and muttered what later I understood was "*quat' fr'.*"

"What?" I said automatically in English. "*Comment? Combien?*"

The man held up four fingers. I hurriedly paid, grabbed my change, and rushed into the theater. I might have known that I was going to "peanut heaven" on a sixteen-cent ticket, and after a perilous odyssey I arrived in the topmost row of the highest gallery, so close to the ceiling that I had to sit hunched over and stare down through smoke-blue air at the tiny stage. I was among the roughest kind of workmen, corduroy-garbed, sabot-shod, with berets topping their villainous heads, all smoking the vilest tobacco, and accompanying the stage action by what I *thought* were obscene comments and what I *knew* were lewd gestures.

But the music—ah, the music! What Nietzsche called the "pure yellow" music of Bizet, flowed out of the pit in all its flamencan wit, passion, and despair. And my companions responded to it by humming and whistling and making castanets with their snapped fingers. What a rowdy, a good-humored crew! Although I could not understand or say a word to them, I was just as much with them as I was

to be with a chamber music audience at a concert two years later in the Salle Gaveau.

The Lener Quartet played—the Franck and the Debussy quartets, followed by the Brahms clarinet quintet—and to an ideal audience. Men and women, old and young, of many races and colors, all drawn together by a love for the quintessence of music; and as the strings wove their spell they became relaxed, bemused, and transfixed in a variety of positions, as in a painting.

From where I sat in the balcony's side I could survey the entire audience. Some looked straight ahead, some sat with eyes closed. Others leaned back their heads or bent over and covered their faces with their hands. In the balcony's first row some leaned on their elbows and stared at the stage, or pillowed their heads on their arms and slept.

Sound of the music and sight of the people worked on us like magic; the friend who was with me and I hardly breathed, so complete was our response, so deep our communion with sight and sound. And when the final notes of the Brahms had sounded there was no ovation. Only a slow awakening from the spell, a stirring to life again, a subdued exit from the hall.

We walked to the near-by Place de l'Opéra and found sidewalk seats at the Café de la Paix. It was summer and the night was mild. We sat a long while over our drinks, dazzled by the music, looking at the passing world, and not talking. Some time after midnight we saw two-wheeled vegetable carts lumber by, horse-drawn to Les Halles. Great wheeled, high carts, heaped higher with luminous cauliflowers, radiant green cabbages, golden carrots, like a dawn vision of freshness and plenty.

The last time I heard music in Paris was a year later. On my last night in the city, a moon-bright May night, I went alone to the Opéra to hear *Le Crépuscule des Dieux*, as the French translate *Der Götterdämmerung*; and found myself in the back row of a loge from where I could see the opposite loges, but not the stage. No matter. The music was what I had come to hear, not to see the fat Wagnerians bend the boards with their heavy tread. The chair was uncomfortable, and so I stretched out on the floor with my back to the wall, to

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the apparent horror of the French family who occupied the front of the loge—the daughter excepted, a sweet thing who turned her head again and again and smiled. I beckoned her to join me and she pretended to be outraged. What a delightful flirtation we had!

And how relaxed I was!—stretched out on the carpeted floor, musing and smoking, glancing at the girl and beyond her to the dark-red silk-trimmed loges across, all but darkened, and to the faint glitter of the great candelabraed ceiling; while over and above all rose the ocean of Wagner's music, swelling to an almost unbearable climax in the immolation scene, followed by the apotheosis of the closing theme which sounded in me for years after—and still does.

I walked home to my hotel, stopping on the Pont des Arts to look up and down the river. It was my last night in Paris; I was transported by that realization and by the music to an emotional stratosphere in which I was entirely reconciled to what had been and what was to be. Apollinaire's haunting bridge poem was in my mind, its refrain flowing with the river:

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure  
Les jours s'en vont je demeure—

### IV

I have never heard grand opera in Italy. How I regret now that I did not experience Verdi at La Scala! I did not even go to Milan. So effectively did Florence enchant me that I left it only briefly during the four months I was in Italy. Genoa, Pisa, and Naples I knew in passing, and I spent all of a week in Rome. There I bicycled into the Campagna, placed wild violets on the graves of Keats and Shelley, fell in love with the Cyrene Venus in the National Museum, feared the fleet busses which hunted the streets like predators—and watched Toscanini conduct.

His was the only music I heard in Rome, and now, nearly twenty years after, I can still hear it. The orchestra played the *Roman Carnival Overture* of Berlioz, Respighi's *Pines and Fountains of Rome*, and the Haydn 102d in B flat major. The concert was played



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in the hall called the Augusteo, a circular building said to have been erected on the site of Augustus Caesar's tomb.

I had the good fortune to get an overflow seat behind the orchestra, so that I faced Toscanini. Not only did I see the *maestro* as his musicians saw him, his disciplined gestures, his face alternately mobile and masklike, but I heard him exhort the players by singing and shouting; and to all of this I responded kinetically, as if I were a musician once again.

Rome held nothing for me after that concert. I returned to Florence, where the window of my room on the Arno overlooked rosy-tiled roofs, the Duomo, and the Campanile, to the hills of Fiesole beyond. The intimacy of Florence was charming and irresistible. The dense concentration of its treasures surrounded one with sculpture, painting, architecture, bridges, gardens, all accessible in short walks. Even the Duce himself had not been able to keep Florentines from walking in the streets, rather than on the narrow sidewalks.

One rainy Sunday afternoon I heard Sabata conduct a symphony concert in the gorgeous municipal theater with its blood-red décor. More than the music I remember the beauty of the Florentine women, young and old, and how elegantly they were gowned. Another time I heard an evening concert of chamber music by candlelight in the Sala Bianca of the Palazzo Pitti. A string quartet played Schubert and Brahms; and the great Ottorino Respighi himself rendered his own piano compositions, and accompanied his wife in Brazilian songs by Villa Lobos.

Signora Respighi was a magnificent woman, her sleek black hair impeccably coiffed, her large, well-proportioned body molded in a white gown. The music, the white room, my awareness of the great paintings by Botticelli, Raphael, and Michelangelo housed in other rooms under the same roof, the performers, and the sophisticated audience, all blended in one of the rarest musical experiences I have ever had.

All that was lacking to make it perfect was my companion—she from whom I had parted months before. Or was it her absence, indeed, that made it perfect? I sensed that inseparable mingling of

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joy and sorrow, that bittersweetness, in which pleasure and pain are inseparable, and what Yeats had in mind, perhaps, when he wrote

O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,  
Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?  
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,  
How can we know the dancer from the dance?

### V

My European base was the old Burgundian ducal capital of Dijon. The town's chief claim to musical fame was antiquarian, Jean-Philippe Rameau having been born there in 1683. There was little current music worth listening to, except for occasional concerts by the boys' choir of the Cathedral. When they sang Palestrina in their sexless voices the great stone temple echoed like a seashell.

It was my radio—called T.S.F. by the French—that solaced me musically during the years of self-imposed exile in Dijon. I bought an old-fashioned set with so many dials, batteries, and antennas that it took me a week to master its combinations. When I did, there opened for me an international world of music, from London to Warsaw, in which most of the broadcasting was by advertising-free state monopolies. Over the Prague and Bratislava stations I heard lyrical hours of Smetana and Dvorak, and Budapest broadcast Dohnanyi, Kodaly, and gypsy café music. Warsaw went back and forth through the entire repertoire of Chopin. From Radio Berlin I absorbed inexhaustible programs of Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Wagner. La Scala broadcast opera every night. The BBC taught me to love Vaughan Williams, Elgar, and Delius.

My apartment was high above a public square in the working quarter, almost never quiet, and I wore headphones with a long cord which enabled me to hear the music I chose and to shut out the noise of wheels and shoes on cobbles, the ring of bicycle bells, the bloot of auto horns, and the drunken quarrels of my neighbors.

One summer night I heard an uninterrupted broadcast of *Tristan und Isolde* from Bayreuth. Instead of between-the-acts, spell-breaking commentators, the Stuttgart radio broadcast the ticking of a

metronome in order that listeners might know the station was still on the air.

My choice of programs was not always highbrow. *Le jazz hot* was becoming a cult in France, and I listened weekly to a *disque* broadcast from Paris. Once the announcer's remarks about American jazz were so mistaken that I wrote him a long letter about some of my own experiences as a dance musician. The next week I heard it read over the air, and then I began to get letters from *aficionados* all over Western Europe! One even came to see me—an intense, pimply, gangling young French saxophonist who prevailed upon me to spend a week end at his home in Chaumont, fifty miles to the north in the province of Champagne.

What a week end! He was the only child of a rich wine merchant, and lived with his parents in a chateau on the edge of town. He had recruited an orchestra among the musicians of the district, and they were gathered to greet me in the music room of the chateau. None of them could play "in the groove," but I didn't care. I took off my coat, rolled up my sleeves, loosened my belt and shoelaces, and went to work on a *period grand*, painted naughtily in the manner of Fragonard and Boucher. Then I seized my friend's saxophone and blew the kinks out of it, smote the string-bass, and ran amok on the traps. We were deliriously happy.

The session lasted all day, all night, and on until noon of the next day. Sustenance and stimulation were provided by servants who kept the ice buckets filled with champagne and the buffet fat with *pâtés*, poultry, *écrevisses*, bread, and sweet butter. One by one the players dropped out, until only my host and I were left. After a twelve-hour sleep I was driven back to Dijon by a chauffeur and footman. My friend went to a sanitarium for a rest cure.

Since then my musical debauches have been confined to chamber music.

# M. ZOSHCHENKO AND HIS ART

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by J. A. Posin

**M**IKHAIL ZOSHCHENKO was born in 1895 in the Ukraine—the name indicates Ukrainian origin—the son of a provincial member of the intelligentsia. For a while, he studied law at the University of St. Petersburg, but World War I put an end to his academic career. He served as an officer in the czar's army. After the Revolution of March 1917, he served the Provisional Government of Kerensky, and after the Bolshevik coup of November 1917, he did a stint in the Red Army. When he returned to civilian life, in the early 'twenties, he settled in Petrograd (later to be renamed Leningrad) and joined the Petrograd literary circle, "The Serapion Brothers." He soon found his genre: a short, satirical storiette, which he exploited for upward of two decades until his career came to an abrupt stop.

During that time he was a very popular writer—with the readers, if not always with the party-line critics (so far as is known, Zoshchenko never joined the Communist party). There were daily, weekly, and monthly publications which liberally availed themselves of his talent. There were, also, numerous editions of his stories—stories which were, as a Russian saying goes, "shorter than a sparrow's beak"—in separate volumes.

Zoshchenko consciously and deliberately wrote for the masses. He scorned conventional literary effects; he wrote in the most widely understood medium, the street talk. However, the seeming simplicity of his language is deceiving. He had to work hard to acquire it, for it was not "native" to him: he was a comparatively well-educated person. In this effort to master his literary technique, the association with such writers as Zamyatin—whose superb satire, *We*, anticipated by thirty years and far surpassed in quality the recent best seller, 1984—with whom Zoshchenko came in contact in Petrograd, could not help benefiting Zoshchenko. He was also encouraged and helped by Maxim Gorky.



The character of the publications which served as the most frequent outlets for Zoshchenko's work makes inevitable the inference that his audience was the mass audience of the Soviet Union, not the select highbrow audience. Strictly speaking, such a highbrow audience hardly exists any longer in the Soviet Union. And even a cursory perusal of Zoshchenko's stories is sufficient to convince any one that they are devoid of any "preciousness" or any special subtlety. Like *Alice In Wonderland*, they are written for anybody who can read (including children), though the more sophisticated reader will derive a great deal more from them, *as usual*.

There is no evidence to support the view that Zoshchenko's popularity diminished toward 1946, although there were some attempts on his part to change his genre and engage in writing longer, nonsatirical narratives (partly autobiographical). These attempts were not successful, either from the standpoint of merit or that of popular acceptance. They remained just isolated attempts. Anyway, as he himself once stated, there was enough material in his own genre to last him a long lifetime.

In August 1946, however, Andrei Zhdanov, at that time an all-powerful member of the Russian Politburo and a personal confidant of dictator Stalin, made a speech in which he attacked the literary periodicals *Zvezda* ("The Star") and *Leningrad* for the continuous publication of the stories of Mikhail Zoshchenko. Following this attack, all Russian periodicals stopped publishing Zoshchenko's stories, and he has completely disappeared from the literary scene. His present whereabouts is unknown.

Thus, an epoch was closed in Russian literary life. There have been other seemingly inexplicable purges of authors in the Soviet Union before—Boris Pilnyak was one of them—but Zoshchenko had for so many years been working with the apparent approval of the authorities that his final purge could not help being a shock.

And yet, if one is to accept the initial premise of dictatorship—namely, that all the enemies of the totalitarian state should be silenced or exterminated—the severe measures taken against Zoshchenko are not without logic. For about a quarter of a century, M. Zoshchenko had poked fun at the seamy sides of Soviet life. In

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almost every one of his humorous sketches, the people and situations which impede the progress of socialism and collective-minded thinking are ridiculed. More specifically, the target of Zoshchenko's satire is the selfish, backward, not-social-minded *obyvatel*, a term difficult to translate properly, which denotes a person thoroughly devoid of social consciousness, a "hoarder" type, a person who, according to a Russian saying, proclaims: "My hut is on a side; I know nothing," or, anglicized, "I don't want to be bothered!" Another term for the same type is *meshchanin*—literally, a small-townner, but in its figurative use denoting a philistine. So far as the American reader is concerned, the important thing in Zoshchenko's writings is not the incident or the situation per se. The important thing is *byt*, i.e., the portrayal—frequently unconscious—of the Soviet way of life, in which incident and situation are important only in so far as they contribute to the portrayal. Though the situations in Zoshchenko's stories are many, the central type is always the same, the philistine. Needless to say, this philistine is practically never a Communist, certainly never a responsible Party worker. That would not be tolerated by any editor in Russia, and, if by some miracle it were once, that would be the last terrestrial deed of that particular editor. In the story called "An Incident," a mother traveling with her sick child can find no one among her traveling companions to take care of the infant long enough to allow her time to get off the train at a station to eat a bowl of soup. All are afraid she might leave the child with them for good. When, finally, somebody does take the child, that person is all too willing to believe the worst when the mother is slow in returning to her car. Are the Russians so suspicious by nature? Or are the conditions of life in Russia, perhaps, such as to foster the extra-suspicious attitude? In "Drama at the Cinema," the uncultured behavior of a crowd at a movie show is presented. In "The Telephone," a tragicomedy is shown when a modern invention—the telephone—is forced into the service of a man who is not intellectually capable of using it. In "Economy Program," the economy-minded Soviet employees decide to stop heating the community lavatory. They save some wood but they also ruin the pipes in the building. Can

one make larger deductions from this little incident? In "The Wedding," the ease with which a Soviet "citizen"—the quotes are indispensable here — marries, and unmarries, is shown. In this story, the groom gets thrown out of the wedding feast for a fancied wrong by the outraged relatives of the bride. I quote the end of the story: "The next day, Volodka Zavitushkin dropped after work into the Civilian Sub-Department, and got himself a divorce. They weren't even surprised there. This, they said, is nothing unusual. It happens every now and then. And they gave him the divorce." In the story "Pushkin," a peculiar problem is presented on the background of an acute housing shortage. On the ninetieth anniversary of Pushkin's death, the house where the famous poet once lived was taken over by the government—which is the huge owner of all real estate in Russia—as a shrine dedicated to the memory of the poet. Some people, including the hero of the story, lose their living quarters because they were unfortunate enough to be living in the suddenly famous house. These people are indignant at the turn of events, and perhaps there is something to say for their side of the picture. Perhaps the luxury of commemorating dead poets can wait when it means dispossessing the living human beings. In "A Dangerous Little Play," the age-old Russian vice—drunkenness—is pictured in a somewhat novel situation.

The temptation is to go on citing examples, but what has already been quoted is enough to show the scope and the target of the satirist. On the whole, it can be said that the target is provided by the discrepancy between the actual and the ideal. So far, it seems, so good: surely the ruling group could find no fault with laughing at the Soviet philistine. But like a powerful poison—a substance which did no harm, and sometimes good, in small doses—Zoshchenko's satire had a lethal effect upon the Stalin dictatorship when its cumulative action over more than two decades was considered. For a legitimate query could not help arising in the minds of the readers, namely: if the average Soviet citizen, over such a long period, remains so ridden with philistinism and petty trivialities of life, where is the *new man*, the product of the "greatest revolution in history"? Is there such a being at all?



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Zoshchenko's stories have frequently been compared with the stories of Chekhov, and, indeed, there is some justification for the comparison. Like Chekhov, Zoshchenko was not an amateur in literature—that is, he did not approach it with an amateur's attitude. Chekhov started writing his brief humorous bits for the humorous weeklies of the early 'eighties with a view to earning a few rubles and helping himself through medical school. And later, when he gave up his medical career for literature, it was literature which was seeking him, not vice versa. Essentially the same attitude was displayed by Zoshchenko, who seems never to have thought in terms of glory, recognition, or the opinion of the coming generations. To him, literature was a job to be done, and, in his peculiar sphere, he did it extremely well. In their respective social strata, both Chekhov and Zoshchenko do substantially the same thing. Chekhov's chief target was the impotence, the emptiness, or the smugness of the intellectual and semi-intellectual philistine. Zoshchenko portrays the selfishness, the bewilderment before the new reality, and the subversion to his own purposes of various government measures on the part of the individual who is being addressed in the Soviet republic as "citizen" (*grazhdanin*) but who is the spiritual heir of the small-towner-philistine (*meshchanin*). As in the case of Gorky, Zoshchenko's best writing comes from personal experience or observation. He had tried a dozen or more trades—fantastically unrelated one to the other—before he settled on that of a writer. Out of his experience as a specialist in rabbit and poultry raising came his delightful story, "The Test of Heroes," where the "specialist" in poultry raising is baffled by the fact that his ducks—drown, of all things. And his experience as a senior patrolman at Ligovo gave the background for that miniature classic, "A Gay Little Episode." His knowledge of the procedural technique of the organs of Soviet justice, and punishment, comes from his experience as an agent of the Criminal Investigation Department in Petrograd.

Like Chekhov, Zoshchenko possesses the gift of being able to grasp the essential point of a character or a situation and present it convexly with the utmost economy of words. And what words!



Zoshchenko is one of the most colloquial writers; in that respect he differs from Chekhov and other humorists. This quality of extreme colloquialism makes him difficult to translate, and necessitates frequent departure from literal rendition. The substitution of *equivalent* expressions rather than literal rendition of Russian colloquialisms is frequently the only satisfactory way out. Let us take a few examples. In the story "The Actor,"\* there is an expression, "*dooy do gory*"—literally, "Blow as far as the mountain"—with which the audience tries to encourage an actor to do his utmost. Obviously, it could not be rendered literally, for it would mean nothing that way. In its place, I substituted the familiar Americanism: "Give it both barrels!" In another scene, in the same story, a person explains to the audience that an actor cannot appear because he is drunk. The expression he uses is the colloquial "*pod mookhoi*," literally, "under the fly." In order to make it intelligible, I had to render it by "under the influence." Both expressions, in their respective tongues, are colloquial to about the same degree. In another story, it is said that the protagonist "*s zhiru besitsa*." Literally, that means "is going mad with fat." It carries no original flavor in English, if indeed it carries any meaning. However, in Russian—and in a given situation—it is perfect. It describes a person who has so much money that he doesn't know what to do with it. So, rather than adhere to the literal wording, unintelligible in English, I put it "straight" and said that the man "didn't know what to do with his money." In still another story, the expression "*budte pokoiny*"—literally, "be calm" or "don't worry"—is rendered, much closer to the original *meaning*, by the expression "never fear." In various references to the agency of law and order, I used consistently the word "police," because that is the familiar term in this country for a similar agency—this despite the fact that since the revolution the Russian police has been renamed "*militzia*" instead of the former "*politzia*." The word "militia," which some persons are tempted to use, has a different and misleading meaning in English. And the same is true in regard to "policeman" and "militiaman." It may be obnoxious, as well as taboo, to

\* From "Zoshchenko's Sketches," *The Russian Review*, July 1950, p. 223.

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Russians to refer to "*militzia*" as "*politzia*," in Russian (though there is no perceptible difference in essential function) because of unpleasant past association with the czar's regime, but that quarrel over the terminology certainly doesn't—and shouldn't—carry over into the English usage. Then there is the matter of profanity. In practically every other of Zoshchenko's stories there is an expression "*sookin syn*" which, literally, means "the son of a bitch." However, in Russian, it possesses various degrees of mildness—with or without a "smile"—or sharpness, depending on the context. In most instances, the flavor of the original is best preserved by softening the expression to "the son of a gun," and so I proceeded to soften it. On several occasions, however, the stronger form is definitely indicated—for instance, in the story "The Mechanic"—and in those instances I used the literal form as being also the *closest in meaning*.

While on this subject of the technique of translation, let me say that I do not regard the *improvement* of the original as a legitimate concern of a translator. The translator should be concerned with the faithful rendition—as nearly exactly as he can—of the *meaning* of the original. An ideal translation must produce the same *impression* in either language, on the same type of a reader. If one were to compare the work of a translator with that of a counterfeiter, it would be easily seen that "improvement" would make the end result worthless: from a counterfeiter's point of view, money must be made not "better than the government's," but "just as good as the government's." The translator should have a similar ambition, with allowance for the greater legitimacy and social acceptability of his profession.

The overwhelming majority of Zoshchenko's stories are extremely short—less than one thousand words, on the average—yet he makes his point clear every time. One of the shortest of his stories is also one of the most significant—"The Devil's Little Plaything,"\* which we may call a symbolic satire. Here, a man, an average Soviet "citizen," buys in a toyshop a game for children, called "*diabolo*." It consists of two sticks tied with a cord, and a roller. The child is supposed to throw the roller up in the air and catch it on the cord

\* *Ibid.*, p. 219.

when it comes down. It develops that the toy, as produced in the Soviet shop, cannot be used because the roller is made out of wood instead of rubber, as called for by foreign specifications. Instead of amusing himself, the child in the story nearly kills himself. The clerk in the store tells the indignant father who bought the toy not to let his child lay his hands on the "plaything" for fear of dire results, but to nail it up somewhere over the child's bed, and let the boy amuse himself by just *looking* at the dangerous toy. The "plaything" made on the foreign pattern obviously represents the revolution and Marxism, perverted in the process of its being applied to Russian conditions. This is one of the most telling blows against the Bolshevik dictatorship, and had the censors been more intelligent—which fortunately censors seldom are—Zoshchenko's writing career might have been stopped in the 'twenties when the sketch first appeared, instead of being allowed to develop for twenty years more.

One could cite examples of Zoshchenko's work almost ad infinitum. But there is much more satisfaction for the reader in making his own firsthand acquaintance with Zoshchenko. Apart from everything else, reading him is pure, unadulterated fun, as shown in my accompanying translations below.

## THE BARREL

Now, friends, spring has finally come. And there—look!—summer is coming, too. And it is good in the summer, comrades! The sun bakes. Hot weather. And you walk around like some sort of devil, minus the winter boots, with just the drawers on, and you breathe. And right here somewhere little birds flutter. Bugs crawl, somewhere. Little worms chirp. Friends, it's good in the summer!

Of course, it is good in the summer, but not entirely.

About two years ago I was working in a co-operative. Such a line occurred in my life. I had to stand behind a counter.

But, comrades, there is nothing nastier for the co-operative work than hot weather. Why, the produce gets spoiled. The produce rots, or do you think it doesn't? Sure thing, it does. And if it rots, does that mean a loss to the co-operative? It sure does.

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And what if, at the same time, along with this, a slogan is perhaps proclaimed: the regime of economy. Well, how are you going to combine this, permit me to ask? Citizens, we must not approach natural phenomena with such complete egotism, and rejoice and dance when the warm weather comes. Citizens, we must consider the public good!

And I remember that in our co-operative the sauerkraut went bad. It became rotten, if you will pardon such an ugly comparison. And that meant not only the direct loss to the co-operative, but an additional expense, too. You see, we had to cart off this spoiled product. That is, besides having the goods spoil on us, we had to put up additional money of our own.

That hurt!

And we had a tremendous barrelful of spoilage. Such a huge barrel, weighing over three hundred pounds. Or God knows how many kilograms. Such an enormous barrel!

And such an unpleasant smell came from it—you'd just as soon die.

Our superintendent, Ivan Fedorovich, lost his zest for life on account of that smell. He was just walking around and sniffing.

"It seems, friends," he said, "it stinks?"

"Not only stinks, Ivan Fedorovich," we said, "it downright smells."

And, indeed, the odor, I must say, was sharp. The passersby were cautious not to walk on our side of the street. Because otherwise they'd get knocked off their feet by the aroma.

And it was necessary to take this little barrel somewhere, to the devil's grandmother, as soon as possible. But the superintendent, Ivan Fedorovich, was reluctant. He was thinking of the monetary loss. One had to hire a truck, et cetera, et cetera. And to cart it to hell and gone, across the whole town. Finally, the superintendent said:

"Although, friends, I'm sorry to lose the money, and our dividends will be weakened by this, nevertheless we'll have to cart off this barrel. The smell is too heavy."



## J. A. POSIN

However, there happened to be among us a shop assistant, Vasia Veriovkin. And he said:

"But why, in dog's name, cart out this barrel, comrades, and thereby squander the people's hard-come-by money, and weaken our own dividends? Let us roll this barrel into the courtyard. And let's wait and see what the morning will bring."

We pushed the barrel into the yard. We came in the morning. The barrel was empty. They stole the kraut during the night.

We, the workers of the co-operative, felt much happier on account of that, and the work was just going by itself. Everybody felt transported. Our superintendent, Ivan Fedorovich, the little pet, was walking around and rubbing his hands.

"This is excellent, comrades," he said. "Now I don't care if all the goods get rotten. We shall do this always."

Soon another barrellful went bad on us. And also a tubful of pickles. We were rejoiced. We rolled the goods into the courtyard, and opened the gate slightly. Let them see better from the street, we figured. Welcome, citizens!

Only, this time we figured wrong.

They not only carried off the kraut, but they rolled away the barrel, too. And also they stole the tub.

Well, on subsequent occasions we would dump the spoiled product on a mat. And they invariably carried it away, mat and all.

## THE MECHANIC

Friends, I am not going to waste time arguing who is most important in the theater: the actor, the director, or, perhaps, the carpenter. The facts will show. They always speak for themselves.

This thing happened in Saratov or in Simbirsk\*—in short, somewhere not far from Turkestan. It happened in the city theater. The opera was playing in that city theater. Besides the outstanding performance by the actors, there was in this theater, among other things, a mechanic—Ivan Kuzmich Miakishev. In a general group picture which was taken in 1923 they stuck this mechanic somewhere on a

\*Later renamed Ulianovsk, in memory of V. I. Lenin-Ulianov [J. A. P.].

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side: just technical personnel, you know. And in the center, on a chair with a back to it, they placed the tenor.

Mechanic Ivan Kuzmich Miakishev did not say a word about this rudeness, but he began to harbor a certain surliness.

And soon afterward, the following thing happened. They were playing *Russlan and Ludmilla*. Music by Glinka. Maestro Katzman was the director. And at a quarter minutes to eight, two of the mechanic's girl friends came to visit him. Whether he had invited them before or they barged in by themselves, no one knew. So these two girls appeared, flirting for all they were worth, and asked to be permitted to sit in the orchestra in order to see the performance.

The mechanic said:

"Why, of course, mesdames. I shall get you a couple of tickets right away. Sit here, in the booth, for a minute."

And he himself, of course, ran to the manager.

The manager said:

"I can't do it. Today is a holiday, as you know. Crowds and crowds of people. Every seat is accounted for."

The mechanic said:

"Oh, so that's the way it is, is it? Well, then I refuse to perform. In short, I refuse to illuminate your production. Play if you can without my assistance. We'll see then which one of us is of the greatest importance, and whose picture should be taken from a side and who should sit in the center." And he ran back to his booth. He turned out the lights in the entire theater, locked the booth with all his keys, and sat there flirting with his girl friends.

Here, of course, a regular snag developed. The manager was running in circles. The audience was yelling. The ticket seller was squealing, being afraid that somebody might make off with his money in the dark. And the chief operatic tenor, the tramp who had always been accustomed to be photographed in the center, appeared before the management and said in his tenor voice:

"I refuse to use my tenor voice in the dark. If," he said, "it stays dark, then I leave. My voice," he said, "is valuable to me. Instead, let the mechanic sing, the son of a bitch!"

The mechanic said:

"He don't have to sing. Spit in his eye. If he, the bastard, has his picture taken in the center, then let him sing with one hand, and turn on the lights with the other. A fine piece of garbage! He thinks that because he is a tenor, I have to light his way all the time. The days of tenors have gone forever."

And at this point, of course, the mechanic came to blows with the tenor.

In the midst of that, the manager came running and said:

"Where are those two broads? Because of them, a complete ruin is impending. I'll find seats for them some place right away, may a cow gore them to death!"

The mechanic said:

"Here they are. Only, your ruin is not coming through them but through me. I'll turn on the light right away. I don't begrudge the electric power to anyone." And he turned on the light that very minute.

"Get going," he said.

They seated his girls in choice seats, and the performance started.

Now, you figure out for yourselves who is the most important person in this complex theatrical mechanism!

## A GAY LITTLE EPISODE

The Ligovo train never travels fast. Whether the condition of the road does not permit it or whether they put on altogether too many semaphores, I don't know. But the fact is that the movement of the train is amazingly slow. It is downright insulting to one's pride to go by it. And, of course, because of that slowness it is usually frightfully boring. To tell the honest truth, there is absolutely nothing to do on that train.

To look at passengers, of course, presents little interest. Besides, they may become offended. "What," they would say, "are you looking at me for? Trying to recall where we've met before, or something?"

And it isn't always possible to engage in your own affairs. For instance, it is impossible to read. The electric bulbs are particularly

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dull. And they are attached very high up. They glow from way above like some sort of live coals but there's no joy or benefit from that illumination.

However, the bulbs have nothing whatever to do with this story. This gay little episode occurred in the daytime. But, to come right down to it, it is dull traveling in daytime, too.

And so, on a Saturday afternoon, a certain Feklusha was seated in the car for nonsmoking passengers. Her full name was Fyokla Timofeyevna Razuvayeva. She was traveling from Ligovo to Leningrad on business—to replenish her stock of goods: she sells apples and sunflower seeds from a basket in the Ligovo depot.

And so, this same Feklusha started out for the Shchukin Market in Leningrad. She was planning to get a box of condemned Antonovka apples.

And she sat down near the window at Ligovo, and tried to endure her travel. For a while, it was quite uneventful. Opposite her, a certain Nikita Fedorov was seated, and alongside of her was sitting Anna Ivanovna Bludechkina, a Soviet employee from the Department of Social Insurance. All of them were from Ligovo, and they were going to Leningrad to work.

But soon after Ligovo a new passenger entered. A military man. Up to that time, he had been riding on the platform. And he sat down diagonally across from Fyokla Timofeyevna Razuvayeva. And he kept on traveling in that corner.

Fyokla Timofeyevna, may she enjoy the best of health and prosperity, untied her kerchief and, having done so, began, in her mind, to speculate on commercial topics: e.g., how many Antonovka apples might there be in a box, and so on.

Afterward, she glanced out the window. And still later, she began to doze a little, from the completeness of her boredom. Whether she, the sweet thing, was affected by the warmth of the carriage, or whether the boring views of nature had their effect on her, but Fyokla began to nod. And then she yawned. When she yawned for the first time, nothing happened. The second time, she yawned with full abandon. You could count every one of her teeth. The third time, she yawned even with greater pleasure. And the military man, the



one that was sitting kitty-corner, good-naturedly stuck his finger into her mouth. In jest, of course. Well, it happens frequently that somebody yawns and somebody else sticks his finger into the open mouth. But, then, this only happens between real friends, let us say, who have been mutually acquainted for some time, or between relatives by marriage. But this man was a total stranger. Fyokla was seeing him for the first time.

For that reason, of course, Fyokla got scared. And, being frightened, she quickly shut her trap. And, in doing this, she quite strongly bit the military man on his finger.

The military person shouted in a frightful fashion. Between the shouts, he began to express himself quite vigorously. Why, he said, his finger was almost bitten clean off. Well, he was putting it on a little too thick: his finger was not at all bitten off. Fyokla simply caught it with her teeth a little. And there was practically no blood—a mere half a glassful or so.

A slight altercation ensued. The military person said:

“Why,” he said, “I simply pulled an innocent prank. If,” he said, “I had torn off your tongue, or something else, you might have some reason to bite me, but this way,” he said, “I object! I,” he said, “am a member of the armed forces and cannot permit the passengers to gnaw off my fingers. Nobody will thank me for that.”

Fyokla said:

“Oho! If you had as much as touched my tongue I would have bit off your entire hand at the wrist! I don’t like the people to grab me by the tongue!”

At this point Fyokla began to spit on the floor saying that the finger might have been dirty, that devil only knew what it might have touched before. You mustn’t do such things. It’s not hygienic.

But their discussion was cut short right there: the train reached Leningrad.

Fyokla exchanged a few more pleasantries with the military man, and went off to the Shchukin Market.

A CRIMINAL CASE

The thing is, Vassily Konopatov was riding with a young lady. Had he been alone, everything would have turned out in the best shape. But no—the devil prompted Vasia to go on the streetcar with a girl.

And — the main thing — everything worked out so unsatisfactorily! For instance, Vasia had never been in the habit of going by streetcars. He always trudged on foot. That is, there'd been no instance when that fellow climbed into a streetcar and voluntarily gave up a dime to the conductor.

But here, he had to show his manners. As if to say: "Wouldn't you, dear young lady, like to take a ride in the trolley? Why should you step into pools with your slippers?" Have you ever seen such high-society manners?

So, Vasia Konopatov got into the streetcar and dragged in the lady after him. And not only dragged her in, but even paid for her practically without argument.

Well, he paid; so what? There is nothing special in that. He may as well have stood in one spot, the low-down soul that he is, and not got on a high horse. But no—the show-off began to grab at leather things. The overhead straps, that is. Well, he grabbed once too often.

The fellow had had a small watch, and it was lifted. And it had been right there just a moment before. And the next moment, when he wanted to look at it in order to show off before the lady, there was no watch. Of course, he started shouting.

"What kind of stuff is this?" he said. "Once in a lifetime a person breaks into the streetcar, and they don't leave him alone!"

At that point, of course, chaos began to prevail in the streetcar. The vehicle stopped. Vasia, of course, at first accused his lady of lifting the watch. The lady burst into tears:

"I am not in the habit," she said, "of grabbing people by their watches."

At that point, the passengers began to exert pressure.

"It is," they said, "an outrage to cast the shadow on the young lady."

The young lady said through her tears:

"Vassily Mitrofanovich! I hold no grudge against you. Misfortune," she said, "will bend down any man. But," she said, "let us go—I beg you—to the Criminal Department. Let them record there that the watch has disappeared. And perhaps it will be found, glory be to God."

Vassily Mitrofanovich replied:

"The Criminal Department has nothing to do with this. And as regards my suspecting you, be so kind and forgive me. Misfortune, it is quite true, does bend a man down."

Here the passengers began to express themselves. How is such a thing possible, they wanted to know. If the watch has disappeared, then people should go to the Criminal Department and make a report, without fail.

Vassily Mitrofanovich said:

"Why, citizens, I just haven't the time. And besides, I have no stomach for going to the Criminal Department. I have no particular business there. One doesn't *have* to go there!"

The passengers said:

"One does. How else can it be if the watch has disappeared? Let's go. We'll be witnesses that your watch was stolen."

Vassily Mitrofanovich replied:

"I shall not go anywhere. You can't force me!"

However, in the end he had to go.

And what do you think, my dear friends? The fellow went into the Criminal Department but he didn't come out of there. Just as I said: he didn't come out of there! He got stuck there. The thing is, he came with a witness and explained everything. They said to him:

"All right, we'll find your watch. Fill out this questionnaire. And tell us what kind of a watch it was."

He began to fill out the paper and to explain, and he got confused.

They began to ask him where he'd been in 1919. They told Vasia to show them his thumb. Well, you've guessed the rest. They ordered him to stay and not to go away. But they let the young lady go.

Just think what's taking place, citizens! The man came into the Criminal Department on personal business, one might say—why, it

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was he whose watch was lifted! And nevertheless—such a turn of affairs!

It's true: he didn't want to go there in the first place, he balked by instinct. But, inasmuch as he went trustingly, they should have treated him more kindly. They didn't have to nab him right away. They should have taken him in a couple of days. Otherwise, it doesn't look good.

### THE GUESTS

Of course, there's no use talking! The guest nowadays has become abnormal. You have to watch him all the time. To see that he'd put on his own overcoat on leaving and that he won't put on an extra fur cap.

Of course, you have to let him have a go at the eats. But why should he wrap the food in the napkin and take it along? This is downright uncalled for. If you don't watch out for this, why, then in two evenings' entertainments the guests may cart out all the property down to beds and cupboards. That's the kind of guests we have nowadays!

To illustrate this point. Friends of mine had a little incident happen during the current holidays.

For Christmas, they had invited about fifteen guests of various kinds. Among them, there were ladies and nonladies, the habitually drinking individuals and the occasionally drinking ones. The entertainment was lavish. The eats alone cost close to seven rubles. The drinks were Dutch. Two and a half per head, the ladies exempt. Although this is silly, to speak frankly. Some ladies lap up so much that they would beat any man by a mile. But let us not go into these details in order not to upset our nerves. This is the hosts' concern. They know best.

There were three hosts at that party. The Zefirov couple and their old man—the wife's papa—Evdokimych.

He probably was invited especially for the purpose of helping watch the guests. "The three of us," they said, "can watch the guests very thoroughly. We'll take count of each guest."



They began to watch.

The first casualty was Evdokimych. This oldster, may God grant him health and a happy old age, had gobbled up so much food in the first five minutes that he couldn't even say "mama."

He was just sitting and rolling his eyes and humming suggestive things to the ladies.

The host Zefirov, himself, was very much upset by this parental prank. He was hurt. He started to walk around the apartment and to watch that there be nothing untoward. But by about twelve o'clock, from the completeness of his hurt feelings, he himself became loaded to the point of utter disgust. And he fell asleep on a prominent spot: on a window sill in the dining room.

Later it developed that he caught a cold in the jaw while asleep, and for three weeks thereafter he was sporting a swollen jaw.

The guests, having gobbled up their fill, began to play and frisk about. They played blindman's buff, tag, and a game called "little brush."

While "little brush" was in progress, the door suddenly opened and Mme Zefirov walked in, pale as death.

She said:

"This is pure hoodlumism! Someone has just unscrewed an electric bulb in the lavatory. Twenty-five candle power! Why, after that one cannot even allow the guests to enter the lavatory!"

Noise and excitement arose.

Papa Evdokimych, of course, sobered up in a moment. He grew excited and began to grab for the guests, but the ladies, of course, squealed and wouldn't allow themselves to be touched.

The men said:

"If that is the case, let everybody be searched!"

Immediate measures were taken. Doors were locked. The search began.

The guests personally turned out their pockets in turn, unbuttoned their shirts and trousers, and took off their shoes. But nothing especially incriminating was uncovered, except several sandwiches, half a bottle of Madeira wine, two small wine glasses, and one pitcher.

## M. ZOSHCHENKO AND HIS ART

Mme Zefirov, the hostess, began to apologize most profoundly: she said she had been unduly excited and had cast a shadow of suspicion on such select company. She expressed a conjecture that, perhaps, an outsider had entered the lavatory and unscrewed the bulb.

However, the evening was ruined. Nobody wanted to play "little brush" any more; the dances with the balalaika accompaniment petered out, too; and the guests began to disperse quietly.

And in the morning, when the host peeled open his eyes, everything was finally explained.

It seems that the host, fearing that some enthusiastic guest might make off with the bulb, had unscrewed it himself, and put it in his side pocket.

And it got crushed there. The host, apparently, had pressed it too hard when he fell asleep on the window sill.

*A fanatic is one who redoubles his efforts after he has forgotten his objective.*

—GEORGE SANTAYANA

## *Benediction of Ice*

AVELINE PERKINS

Combustible:  
The chilling mystery;  
From chasms of fire  
Slide the manufactured glaciers,  
And furnaces freeze  
The marrows of gaseous bones.

By the sacrament of carbon dioxide—  
That incense diffused  
From the censer of absorption towers—  
By burnt offerings to boilers—  
By fiery invocations—

Is granted the benediction of ice.

Out of the squeezing millstones  
Of multi-stage compressors,  
From sweltering steam,  
From the pendulum of heat and pressure,  
Flow the mass-produced icebergs.

After mountainous legerdemain  
Are conjured the fictitious snows.

# FUNDAMENTALISM VERSUS

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by Edward A. White

THE DECADE of the 1920's witnessed a resurgence of the long-standing warfare in the United States between science and religion. It had its origin, in part at least, in the worship of science following the first World War. It reached its dramatic climax in the trial of John Thomas Scopes at Dayton, Tennessee, where the claims of science over scriptural inerrancy appeared to have won a resounding victory. After the Scopes trial the warfare was mitigated somewhat as liberal theologians offered easy explanations for the accommodation of religion and science. And at length, with the economic collapse of 1929, the conflict subsided as it became evident that social and economic problems had become for the moment more compelling for most Americans than were those of Biblical interpretation. In the interval, however, much had been said and written on both sides of the questions in dispute. It is the purpose of this article to make a reappraisal of some of the literature associated with the conflict of the 'twenties, on the assumption that the passage of a quarter of a century since Dayton gives a new perspective toward and finds a new meaning in this quickened period of a continuing controversy.

Although the conflict between religion and science has its roots deep in human nature—where man's quest for certitude and security encounters his acknowledgment that the proofs of the one and the guaranties of the other are never adequate—its manifestation in a particular period and area necessarily reflects the peculiar conditions of its setting. The United States in the 1920's, and particularly the Mississippi Valley, provided conditions which helped to make this phase of the conflict understandable. The struggle of the 'twenties was not grounded in a revival of historical studies as in the late nineteenth century, nor in the interest in human personality which illuminated the controversy centered in William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* in the early twentieth. The controversy between the "fundamentalists" and the "modernists," as



# MODERNISM, 1920-30

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the antagonists in the current battle came to be known, was occupied primarily with the moral issue. The main concern was whether the Bible, if challenged in its historical and scientific pronouncements, could still maintain the validity and power of its moral prescriptions; whether the scientist, no longer guided by Biblical commitments, could find in his purely intellectual presuppositions sufficient warranty for the moral life. The issue was not, as an English writer mistakenly assumed, "the credibility of the whole of Judges and the edibility of the whole of Jonah," but rather as Bryan saw it, a battle of the hosts of the Lord in a final grapple with the forces of Hell. The real point in dispute was whether the attack on the literal interpretation of the Old Testament might not also undermine the moral teaching of the New Testament. What the fundamentalist feared most was that the current criticism would weaken men not so much in manipulating logic and evidence as in struggling for righteousness in life. The warfare of the 'twenties was not a fight for obscurantism—it was, in the eyes of the fundamentalists, a crusade in the prophetic tradition against the forces of evil.

From this basic distinction between fundamentalist and modernist there followed important consequences. The fundamentalist, being already persuaded that he had the truth, believed that the moral problem was the central problem and hence that the meaning of life was to be found in the relationship of a god of righteousness to a man of sin. "The two great historic presuppositions, in the Fundamentalist view," one of its spokesmen held, "are God enveloped in a terrible righteousness, man as offending against His law and under His just wrath." For the modernists, on the contrary, the dominant concern was the quest for truth. The defense of the modernist position in the current periodicals turned primarily on its effort to accommodate its dogma to the affirmations of science, a characteristic which Reinhold Niebuhr, writing at the end of the period, recognized as a fatal weakness. "The curse of mod-

## FUNDAMENTALISM VERSUS MODERNISM

ern religion," he observed, "is that it is so busy adjusting itself to the modern mind that it can find no energy to challenge the modern conscience." The critics of modernism held that its preoccupation with intellectual considerations robbed it of moral fervor and initiative.

The fundamentalist-modernist controversy showed, in addition, a significant cleavage on social and economic issues. Areas of fundamentalist strength in the Mississippi Valley were the small towns and the rural sections, while the larger city churches found the modernist doctrines of the benevolence of God and the sinlessness of man congenial to the growing wealth and prosperity of the postwar years. Both houses identified their opponents with ideas or movements hostile to essential Americanism. For the modernist, the fundamentalist was likely to be not only an opponent of evolution, but also a supporter or member of the Ku Klux Klan, a prohibitionist, a "snooper" or regulator of private morals, an isolationist, and a proponent of state ownership. The fundamentalist, on the other hand, was equally confident that the enemies of the commonwealth were universally enlisted in the rival camp. "There is not a stranger combination in the world," observed a writer in the publication, *Christian Fundamentals*, "than the one evolution produced. It brings together the Reds of Russia, the university professors of Germany, England and America, the I.W.W.'s and every bum from the down-and-out sections in every city in America. There are two classes of people that vote together every time this subject is discussed, and that is the university crowd and the social Reds, and they are practically alone in their advocacy of evolution." An observer in the English *Contemporary Review* with more ingenuity than insight associated fundamentalist theology in the Middle West with the support of conservative economic presuppositions. The American business world was fundamentalist, he believed, because of an "instinctive recognition" that an attack on the established economic order would follow quickly upon a challenge to traditional theology. This, however, was the view of one far off from the struggle. Actually the class affiliations of the fundamentalists of the Mississippi Valley were rather with the lower

## EDWARD A. WHITE

middle class and farming elements than with the prosperous business and financial classes whose contributions built the substantial metropolitan churches. And the significant social and economic outcome of the controversy at the end of the decade was the discovery that the fundamental doctrines were applicable to social justice as well as to individual morality.

Granted that the fundamentalist and the modernist of the Middle West dealt with different issues and relied upon different basic assumptions, yet how far did these differences really separate them in their common membership in the Christian commonwealth? Some examples of the religious thought of the period from both camps will facilitate appraisal. Prominent at different levels of insight among the fundamentalists were William Jennings Bryan, active as orator and publicist until his death during the Scopes trial at Dayton in 1925, and Dr. William B. Riley of Minneapolis, one of the founders of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association, and a leading evangelist in the Valley during the decade.

No American was more prominently associated with the warfare of science and religion than the Great Commoner, whose career, identified throughout with the powers and limitations of the Middle West, came to an end after what he described as "the day I have waited for," the opportunity to do battle against the detractors of man's divine nature. Bryan had himself formulated the issues in his writings and speeches early in the decade. In "God and Evolution," published in the *New York Times* in February 1922, and in subsequent articles in the magazine, *Forum*, he stated the case against Darwinism, while in his James Sprunt Lectures under the title "In His Image" at the Union Theological Seminary in Virginia in 1922 he elaborated the theological considerations on which his opposition to the evolutionary doctrine was based. Bryan's central proposition was that the Darwinian hypothesis was a menace to fundamental morality because by linking man with brute nature it obscured God and "weakened the virtues that rest upon the religious tie between God and man." Bryan endorsed the findings of the English sociologist, Benjamin Kidd, whose *Science of Power*, published in 1918, had associated Darwinian and Nie-



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tzschean doctrines with the aggressive military policy of Imperial Germany. Darwinism, said Bryan, did more than destroy the faith of Christians; in addition, it was the basis for the class struggle in that it released the brute in man and intensified his awareness of class antagonisms. Finally, Darwinism discouraged efforts to alleviate social distress and instigate reforms because it held that natural selection precluded the possibility of human tampering with the historical process. Yet in his own appraisal of human nature Bryan abandoned the fundamentalists' profound insight into man's propensity to sin and placed himself alongside the modernist in his optimistic view of man's capacities for personal and social regeneration. Taking as his basic tenet the proposition that God had created man in his own image, Bryan charged his hearers to have faith—first, "in yourselves," second, "in mankind," third, "in your form of government," and fourth, "in God." God came in a poor fourth in Bryan's enumeration, but faith in God he believed adequate, nevertheless, to guarantee the triumph of right. Thus Bryan shared the optimism of the modernists, their overestimation of man's capacity to find solutions for his problems, their blindness to his essential limitations amid the problems of the postwar decade.

While Bryan from the platform and with the pen provided the prominence of national leadership for fundamentalism, a legion of lesser men were the shock troops who bore the brunt of the battle. Chief among them was Riley, whose many publications, bearing such titles as *The Crisis of the Church*, *The Menace of Modernism*, and *Inspiration or Evolution*, furnished the systematic body of ideas from which the fundamentalists drew freely. Riley held Darwinism responsible for the war of 1914, and believed that "the recent baptism of blood . . . as compared with the baptism yet to come, [was] as a local shower to the flood that will prevail over every mountain." The Darwinian doctrine, said Riley, was responsible for the social anarchy of the postwar years. The doctrine of kinship with the ape robbed man of his essential dignity, and responsibility for preaching it rested heavily upon those "capped and gowned men, drawing salaries from tax payers or benevolently in-



clined persons," who were seducing people from essential Christian tenets to the philosophies of Hegel, Marx, and Darwin. The fundamentalists occupied an anti-intellectualist position, but they were aware of a deep source of strength in the grass roots of popular approval. What they objected to most was the fact that the modernists were merely teaching philosophy, not preaching religion. Their quarrel with the God of the liberals was that He lacked the common touch. "The God of a Coe, a Rauschenbusch, a Frank Crane," said Riley, "has played the aristocrat long enough and must now descend to his proper place 'in a democracy'." The fundamentalist was in the tradition of Middle Western democracy in his appeal to the ultimate judgment of the people. And he found theological justification for his democracy in the doctrine that man was created in God's image, not evolved from lower forms of life.

The spokesmen of religion and science alike recognized the challenge of Middle Western fundamentalism to the naturalistic and aristocratic implications of the doctrine of evolution. Harry Emerson Fosdick, throughout the decade the leader of modernist thought from his pulpit on Riverside Drive, undertook again and again to answer the charges of the fundamentalists. He recognized the force of their claim that Darwinism did injustice to the dignity of man. "If evolution does thus brutalize man's conception of his own nature," he wrote, "it is a public enemy." But Fosdick denied that the Darwinian hypothesis necessarily degraded man, and pointed instead to the fallacy of evaluating anything in terms of its origins. He would reverse the process: "Everything is to be judged," he insisted, "by what it has capacity to become." Thus in the evolution of the race, as in the growth of the human individual, the soul at last emerges like a temple from the scaffolding within which it was built. "No matter by what route he came," Fosdick concluded, "man is what he is, with his intelligence, his moral life, his spiritual possibilities, his capacity for fellowship with God."

Professional scientists, by virtue of their special concern being with knowledge instead of morals, were naturally more at home with the modernist view. And the response of the scientists to the

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fundamentalist challenge was even more positive than that of the modernists themselves. From his laboratory at Columbia University and his office at the American Museum of Natural History, Henry Fairfield Osborn quickly entered the lists against Bryan. Osborn answered Bryan's articles "God and Evolution" and "Mr. Bryan Speaks to Darwin" with rejoinders entitled "Evolution and Religion" and "The Earth Speaks to Bryan." In the former he affirmed that evolution was "the most firmly established truth in the natural universe." In the latter he marshaled the evidence in favor of evolution, including the recent discovery in Bryan's native Nebraska of a diminutive tooth which Osborn acclaimed "the herald of our knowledge of anthropoid apes in America." The moral problem, about which the fundamentalists had had much to say, Osborn reduced to the fairly simple query, "Are we living in such a way as to have descendants?" and he expressed the hope that "Nature" and religion would so govern the conduct of America's young men and women as to enable them to evolve in the right direction!

In the more technical language of the professional philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead appealed in his *Science and the Modern World* for increasing accuracy in religious expression disengaged from religious imagery, and in his Lowell Lectures for 1926, *Religion in the Making*, for a more adequate metaphysical basis for theology. The physical scientists, to whom Whitehead assigned the second task, undertook to accomplish it by affirming that adequate religious notions could rest on fundamental natural laws demonstrable by science. The astronomer Henry Norris Russell, for example, in his Terry Lectures of 1925, asserted that the evolutionary struggle belonged to the surface of things, whereas the invariant law underneath it affirmed an order and harmony in nature, and a Power behind it. And so also the physicist Robert A. Millikan, who argued in the same lectureship three years later that religion itself proved the fact of evolution in the history of its own development from crude beginnings to its present state. But upon the issues which were central for the fundamentalists—namely, man's moral nature and his power through the operation of the democratic proc-

ess to control teachings which might corrupt it—the philosopher and scientist raised no loud clamor.

Upon the Mississippi Valley the impact of the controversy between fundamentalism and modernism in the decade of the 'twenties was most notable in the area of education, as evidenced in attempts by the states to prohibit or control the teaching of evolution. Not only in Tennessee was the teaching of man's kinship with the lower forms of life attacked as contrary to public policy. An antievolution law failed by only twenty votes in the Missouri Legislature, and in Arkansas and in Kentucky by only a single vote. In the Upper Valley, modernist clergymen and educators touched with Darwinism were singled out for censure by the fundamentalists. Not even liberal Wisconsin escaped. In 1925 the pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church in Madison was accused of heresy and evolutionism before the Synod, and when he was acquitted his case was carried before the General Assembly of the Church. At the University of Wisconsin, Professor E. A. Ross was a favorite subject for attack. When Bryan heard that a professor at the University of Wisconsin was telling his class that the Bible was a collection of myths he brought the matter to the attention of President Birge. The president "criticized me," Bryan wrote, "but avoided all reference to the professor." Similar instances could be multiplied almost at will.

The major result of the controversy, however, was not merely to discredit Bryan and the fundamentalists. To be sure, Bryan's leadership of the warfare against Darwinism made him the target for much unfair criticism. It was probably not true, as David Starr Jordan charged in one of his letters, that Bryan had "never read a bound book," that "he has only emotional attitudes toward what he never tried to understand," that he "is not the opposite of science, but represents the backwash of knowledge." Unfortunately the controversy often centered upon the question of the literal versus the figurative interpretation of the Scriptures, which was really secondary, rather than upon the question of the nature of man, which was central. For whereas the fundamentalist and the modernist disputed the meaning and scope of scriptural statements



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and their relationship to the findings of science, they agreed about man's essential nature and destiny, his natural goodness and bright prospects for the future. Whether God had created man complete and perfect from the primordial clay or inherent and potential in the evolutionary process mattered little, so long as both parties looked eagerly and confidently upon man's power to achieve the good life for himself and the good society for his fellows. The fundamentalist and the modernist shared an optimistic view of man which indeed seemed entirely justified by the prosperity of the postwar boom of the 'twenties. But throughout the controversy the modernist emphasized the redeeming power of the enlightened mind while the fundamentalist endorsed the untutored religious insights of the common man. Thus every religious denomination was set to thinking about doctrinal questions.

The current interest in theology owes no small debt to the religious controversy of the 'twenties, in which both antagonists acknowledged the relevance of theological issues. Against the modernist plea for an open mind the fundamentalist answered in the words of Walter Lippmann, whose University of Virginia Lectures of 1928, *American Inquisitors*, expressed the essential ambiguity which the controversy involved. "For you," said Lippmann's fundamentalist to the modernists, "there is nothing at stake but a few tentative opinions . . . [You ask] that I submit the foundation of my life to the destructive effects of your skepticism, your indifference, and your good nature. You ask me to smile and to commit suicide . . ." But the fundamentalist did not smile, and certainly he did not commit suicide. Instead, as the 'twenties ended, he joined forces with the modernist for the time being in extolling the divinity of man and awaited a more favorable time to argue the relevance of fundamental doctrines. The writings of many contemporary theologians suggest that this time is now at hand.



# THE WELL AND THE BULLDOZERS

*by George P. Elliott*

**D**URING the next to last spring we lived in Cajalco, my father said one Sunday, "Son, we must dig a well this summer during your school vacation."

I groaned, but he was right. There was one well we used, but it was on the Ramsey property and it was going dry. For the muscats, we needed a lot more water than the Ramsey well gave us.

Father went to Elsinore in May to get a water witch to tell us where to dig. The water witch came on a Sunday for ten dollars. He walked all over our land with a forked hazel switch held tightly in his hands, pointed straight up. When he came to water, he said, it would flop straight down. He found two places; one was on the hill where we couldn't possibly dig a well, but he said it was a strong stream. The other place was in a little hollow at the lower end of the grapes. The water witch said it was a fair stream; his switch trembled and trembled in many spots, but there was one where it flopped over hard. It was there we were to dig.

I tried being a witch all that week after school. I walked around with forked sticks made out of juniper, cottonwood, carob, orange, lemon, but none of hazel because I couldn't find any. They flopped over all right, but never in the same place twice. The water witch was a very wonderful man, and my little brother Jimmy had nightmares about him.

Then we dug the well.

At first it was easy, just shoveling and a little picking. For twenty feet down it was dirt and decomposed granite which needed a casing to hold it back. We cased it with two-by-twelve redwood planks, and the well was four feet square.

When we hit harder granite, we had to pick all the time. First father would pick a while; then he would call for me to lower the

## THE WELL AND THE BULLDOZERS

bucket for him to shovel full of dirt; I would wind it up on the windlass, dump it out, and wait for the next bucketful. After a couple of hours I would go down and pick a while, and father would rest on top, windlassing the full bucket up.

At forty feet we had to blast. Father would go down and drill holes, put sticks of dynamite in, attach a fuse and a cap to each one, pack them in tight, and light the fuses. Then he would climb up the ladder as fast as he possibly could while the fuses burned down to the caps. It was always terrible when we couldn't hear a separate explosion for every stick. That meant either that two had gone off at once or else that one fuse had died out, so that if one of us hit the pick point right on the cap the stick of dynamite would blow up in his face.

This harder granite began to sweat as we went down through it, but not more than a bucketful of water would collect overnight. Once, after a day's work, father climbed out of the well and stood fanning himself with his hat and looking at the hills for a while. "My boy," he said, and I knew he was going to tell me something important because he said *my boy*, "they're wonderful things, the strata. They're as old as the dry hills there; in fact they're a part of them. And yet they bear water for us, and they always will. Our well is a part of them now. It will outlive us a hundred years."

I used to dream of the well, down where it was gloomy and damp, and the acrid smell of dynamite hung around. I was constantly afraid of things dropping down on my head, though nothing very big ever hit me. Sometimes when I was resting, I used to tap on a shovel just to have something to listen to. Old-timers said if the well was deep enough you could look up and see the stars at noon, but I never could from our well; of course, it was only sixty feet deep.

At fifty feet we had a trickle of water. Then we had to drop a pipe down and run a horse-and-a-half gasoline engine to keep it pumped out while we worked. We dug for ten more feet, and had more than enough water for the grapes and an acre of alfalfa. He was a good water witch.

That very winter there was a terrible cloudburst, the worst in

forty-seven years. It lightened and thundered, and rained four inches in two days. The gullies roared with water and the goats shivered and bleated. It was glorious. But many gophers had dug little tunnels up to the casing of our well. (We had caught three thousand gophers in the first year we were there, and hung their tails around the rabbit hutch in a fringe.) Our well was in a little valley, and the cloudburst went down the gopher holes, making them larger and larger and carrying the dirt with the water down into our well. After the cloudburst the dirt around the well was all gone on the upper side, and the well was filled up to the casing with solid mud.

When my father saw it, he slapped his thigh with his hat, and stamped the ground; he cursed before me, a thing he did only when tried beyond his strength.

We had to dig out the well again that spring. The dry, hard mud was almost worse than the granite, because we had to pick instead of blast. Something had happened to the well, too, because there wasn't as much water this time as before. We finished it, though, before the Ramsey well went dry, and had enough for the alfalfa and muscats, and for anything else we should ever be able to grow on our land.

That same spring the surveyors began to come.

They came in spiffy-looking station wagons and went around driving stakes in the ground at various places for miles around. One of them would look through a little telescope on a stand at a black-and-white stick which another one was holding up a long way off. They would yell and wave at each other and write things in little books.

Everybody in Cajalco was upset; all we knew was that the surveyors said it was going to be a reservoir.

"Right of eminent domain," said my father; he had worked for a railroad company once, as a fireman, so everyone had great respect for his knowledge. "A big company will come and we'll have to move. I've seen a railroad line laid right through a graveyard," said my father ominously, "and there was nothing the church could do to stop them."

## THE WELL AND THE BULLDOZERS

All spring the men surveyed, leaving only their stakes to show for it; and in June, notices came to everyone explaining about the reservoir, how it was the terminal reservoir for water for Los Angeles and we would all have to move. *The Southern District Metropolitan Water Corporation*.

"You see," said my father, "and they won't pay a cent more than they have to."

It wasn't so bad, though, because only one man in Cajalco made a living off his land anyway.

That fall, when we all had to move away from Cajalco, the bulldozers and trucks and power shovels came. The bulldozers were terrible. They were huge and noisy; when they started on a cold morning, they sounded like machine guns. They could uproot huge trees. They could go up steep mountains. They moved hills, whole hills they moved to form a dirt dam: they took the Bottom and moved it two miles to make a long dam. They paid no attention to fences or roads or gullies. They dug great troughs. They laid waste the land till you never would have known it.

But to our well they were worst. Our well was sixty feet deep, yet they dug a trench a hundred feet deep and half a mile wide right through our well and into the side of the hill back of where our house had been. To them, our well was just another gopher hole. They didn't even know it was there. Our well was four by four and sixty feet deep, a hole in the ground, and suddenly the bulldozers fixed it so there wasn't any ground for the hole at all. I don't know why they dug this ditch into the hill and then stopped; maybe the Metropolitan Water Corporation knows, or science.

I should like to think of our well still there in the desert, maybe starting to fill up with dust and weeds and ground squirrels and lizards that fall in; or at least, since they built a big reservoir, at least our well could be a deep place in the reservoir. But it's gone completely: there isn't even any ground for the well to be in, and now where the well and the ground were, there is water. The whole landscape is gone under water. And even if you drained the water off, still the bottom of that lake is not the countryside where I lived seven years. The hills would be different; and the sagebrush and



## GEORGE P. ELLIOTT

grapevines and cactus and carob trees and tamarisks, the fences and houses and barns and roads and windmills and our reservoirs and water tanks would be gone, and now some sort of slimy underwater plants would lie there in the middle of the desert in that unrecognizable landscape where I lived for seven years.

### *Hollywood Sidewalk*

EDITH FRISBIE

Near this court where thousands view  
August footprints of the few,  
A humbler, padded foot has trod  
Adequately shod by God.  
Its mark, as firm on walks fresh-paved  
As those by stellar toes engraved,  
Forever states: "Here Fido went  
Trespassing on wet cement."

Thus may the unassuming share  
In vast distinction unaware,  
And waggish ones participate  
In antic doings of the great.

## THE AUTHORS

(Continued from page 3)

since on special service for that University.

The essay here published is based on a lecture given at Occidental College, California, in the summer of 1950. At that time, the program chairman named it "What Is Happening to Man in the Twentieth Century." Both that title and its present one are accurate.

**WALLACE STEGNER** ("Cairo: 1950"), one of the editors of *The Pacific Spectator*, is at present in that uneasy part of the world which lies in and around India. Under a Rockefeller grant, he is there meeting with writers and government people and observing, too, as his article shows, the work done by other Americans which, whatever its primary purpose, adds to the welfare of the state where it is done.

Mr. Stegner's latest book, *The Preacher and the Slave*, a fictional retelling of the life of Joe Hill, appeared last fall.

**FREDERICK BRACHER** ("Of Youth and Age: James Gould Cozzens") appears here for a second time in the pages of *The Pacific Spectator*. His earlier contribution, "Steinbeck and the Biological View of Man," was published in the Winter 1948 issue.

Mr. Bracher is in the English Department at Pomona College, but is now, as at the time of his earlier study, temporarily resident in Monterey, where he is engaged on "a study in the history of values—the degeneration and decline of the

aristocratic ethic and the rise of middle-class prudential ethics."

**CLINTON WILLIAMS** ("The Incorruptibles") teaches writing, especially verse writing, at San Jose State College, in California. His poems have appeared in many magazines. One entitled "No Burial" is in the current issue of *Experiment*. An earlier poem of Mr. Williams', "The Serious Business of Semper Took," was published in the Autumn 1949 *Pacific Spectator*.

**BETTY SUE DAVIDSON** ("The Rivals") says of herself, ". . . my home until recent years was in Galveston. I worked there on the *Galveston Daily News*. . . . I have at various times (although not presently) been interested in theater; have taught dramatics; and worked two seasons with a semiprofessional theater group in Chicago. . . . As of this autumn, my residence (if I ever finish packing) will be Seattle."

Miss Davidson, a Creative Writing Fellow at Stanford University during 1949-50, is now at work on a novel.

**FRANK JONES** ("Enclosed Please Find the Buried Past") defines his present essay as "not a contribution to general enlightenment, but what Gertrude Stein called 'everybody's autobiography.'" The editors agree only with the second half of the comment.

Mr. Jones, who is English by birth and Canadian by upbringing, came to the United States in 1939. He is associate professor of literature and humanities at Reed College, where he is at work on a study of twentieth-

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century politics in relation to the European novel.

**LAWRENCE CLARK POWELL** ("Music Into Silence"), recipient last year of a Guggenheim Fellowship, is now in England, working on a study of the British antiquarian book trade.

At home, Mr. Powell is chief librarian of the University of California Library at Los Angeles, the director of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, and the author of enough books and articles to overfill a biographical note. *Recollections of an Ex-Bookseller* (1950), and *Books on the Land*, a collection of essays to appear in 1951, are his latest writings.

**J. A. POSIN** ("M. Zoshchenko and His Art"), Russian by birth, came to the United States in 1918, acquired citizenship in 1928. Through most of the years between 1928 and the present he has been engaged in teaching Russian language and literature.

Along with his teaching and with the production of a considerable body of original work, Mr. Posin translates from Russian into English and from English into Russian, concerning himself chiefly with contemporary writing. He is now completing the translation of a number of Zoshchenko's stories.

**AVELINE PERKINS** ("Benediction of Ice") says of his writing that he "set out to interpret in poetry the stupendous phenomenon of Indus-

try and the inventiveness of the Power Age." The present poem is one of a series, "Assignments," so named because material for the poems was gathered while the author was filling a succession of newspaper assignments.

**EDWARD A. WHITE** ("Fundamentalism Versus Modernism, 1920-30") teaches history at Stanford University, his work being largely concerned with the history of ideas in America and the place of religious thought in American life. His interest in the latter topic he attributes in part to Reinhold Niebuhr, to whom he is indebted "for the conviction that current issues are understandable by means of religious concepts."

The present article is part of a longer work, *Science and Religion in American Thought Since 1860*, which will appear in book form.

**GEORGE P. ELLIOTT** ("The Well and the Bulldozers") teaches in the English Department of St. Mary's College. His first play, a poetic tragedy in two acts, was given its initial performance there last fall. A long story of his writing was last year included in *Best American Short Stories of 1950*.

**EDITH FRISBIE** ("Hollywood Sidewalk") defines her poems as "light and serious. . . . The first writing to be published was enormously serious. It was only at Carmel that the nonsense poured through."

Miss Frisbie lives in Hollywood where "sometimes I act."

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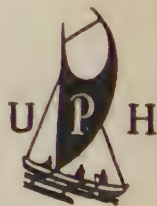
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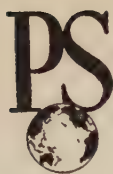
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FOR the better part of the last hundred years research in all fields has been encouraged—which means paid for—in the United States as it has never been before anywhere in the world.

The results of this encouragement have been enormous and mostly good, but among them is one certainly not intended by any supporting individual or foundation. This is the far too frequent isolation of the well-provided researcher. Max Eastman's impertinent essay, "Poets Talking to Themselves," is now adaptable to many subjects. Specialists' writings, whether in literary criticism or in chemistry, are all too often critics or chemists talking to themselves, chemists to chemists only, critics to other critics. It is good talk, necessary talk, it should go on, but in a land where every phase of living depends finally on the general suffrage it is an insufficient offering.

Especially it is insufficient as coming from historians, imaginative writers, philosophers. These are, or should be, the interpreters to all of us. To help them toward this goal is the task to which, above all others, *The Pacific Spectator* is devoted. Whether it is Robert North's "Asian Violence in a Cold-War World" or Frank Jones's amused and amusing "Enclosed Please Find the Buried Past," both in a previous issue; whether Windsor Cutting's "Our Tiniest Adversaries" or Rosalie Moore's "Unhand That Lily," the article published is planned as a spark of understanding passed from one mind to others differently stocked. Without such exchanges, and far more of them than we have now, we stand in danger of becoming a nation of robot specialists, each ignorant outside his specialty and thus incapable of intelligent evaluation of such domestic

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# THE PACIFIC

A JOURNAL OF

VOLUME V

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**ELDON L. JOHNSON** ("Challenge at Mid-Century") says of himself that he is "a political scientist and a onetime government 'Bureaucrat' who is now Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Graduate School at the University of Oregon." He is also an editor of experience, having edited *Personnel Administration*, in Washington, D.C., during 1942 and 1943. The present essay is his third in *The Pacific Spectator*; the earlier

essays appeared in the Autumn 1947 and Autumn 1949 issues.

**THEODORE MORRISON** ("Three Poems") is a poet who has achieved what, in contemporary America, is the all but impossible: he has published three volumes of verse, each having for its content one long narrative poem. The third of the three, *The Dream of Alcestis*, brought out by the Viking Press in 1950, has been reshaped as a play—though not by the author—and had its initial performance last month.

# SPECTATOR

INTERPRETATION

1951

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Mr. Morrison is director of English A at Harvard University and of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference at Bread Loaf, Vermont.

**FREDERICK L. GWYNN** ("Tennyson at Leyte Gulf") says of the background for his article: "I was a naval aviator in the Pacific during the war, and later aide to Fleet Admiral Halsey. I came across the incident [the one embodied in "Tennyson at Leyte Gulf"] while doing some research for Lieutenant Commander J. Bryan III during his col-

laboration on *Admiral Halsey's Story*." Mr. Gwynn is now on the faculty of Pennsylvania State College.

**ROSALIE MOORE** ("Unhand That Lily") makes here her third appearance in *The Pacific Spectator*. *The Grasshopper Man and Other Stories*, a collection of her poems, was published by Yale University Press in 1949 as one of the "Yale Younger Poets Series." The present essay was given as the Annual Poetry Lecture. (Continued on page 251)

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by Eldon L. Johnson

SOME DAY the milk will not come in the morning, the faucets will not run, the bakeries will not bake, the busses will not arrive, and the undertaker will not come to measure the body, to paraphrase a British economist.

Maybe that is the way we are doomed to understand that civilization is not simply *there*, like the sun every morning or the flowers in the spring, but requires spiritual sustenance and human administration. It is of man's making, and it can be of man's undoing. I hope we can learn that much about the nature of social institutions without having to forego the morning milk—lest we make a worse mistake of taking the milk to be civilization. The challenge at mid-century, the same as at every other point in the century, is to respond creatively to those ideas, forces, and actions that threaten to deprive man of his fullest fruition. To delineate the challenge, therefore, is a difficult and dangerous task of diagnosis. The audacity which overcomes one as he looks ahead from mid-century can perhaps be forgiven in the light of Browning's admonition:

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what's a heaven for?

The most significant political fact at mid-century is the polarity of the world: Democratic Industrialism *vs.* Totalitarian Communism, if I may use loose terms to convey both the political and economic conflicts. That constitutes our most urgent challenge. The stakes are colossal, colossal because most of the world still stands in puzzled neutrality, uncommitted to either ideology as yet. Most of the world is in the grandstands, witnessing the race, occasionally cheering—yes, even occasionally betting—for one side or the other but withholding full commitment until comparative strengths have been tested.

I designate this the number one challenge because it is divisive internally, conducing to revolution, and divisive externally, con-



# CHALLENGE AT MID-CENTURY

---

ducing to war. It immobilizes the weak with fear and incites the strong with indignation. It is a cloud under which all human affairs must grope for the light of day. It is not new but it is for the first time imminent. In 1835 Alexis de Tocqueville wrote with uncanny perspicacity:

There are, at the present time, two great nations in the world which seem to tend toward the same end, although they started from different points: I allude to the Russians and the Americans. All other nations seem to have nearly reached their natural limits, and only to be charged with the maintenance of their power; but these are still in the act of growth; all the others are stopped, or continue to advance with extreme difficulty; these are proceeding with ease and with celerity along a path to which the human eye can assign no term. The American struggles against the natural obstacles which oppose him; the adversaries of the Russian are men; the former combats the wilderness and savage life; the latter, civilization with all its weapons and its arts; the conquests of the one are therefore gained by the plowshare; those of the other by the sword. The Anglo-American relies upon personal interest to accomplish his ends, and gives free scope to the unguided exertions and common sense of the citizens; the Russian centers all the authority of society in a single arm: the principal instrument of the former is freedom; of the latter, servitude. Their starting point is different, and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems to be marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.

But what was then only a cloud the size of a man's hand on the horizon is now a menacing cyclone portending destruction. India's millions are undecided. So are the millions of Southeast Asia; so are the millions of Japan; so are millions on the continent of Europe. Here is not merely the challenge at mid-century but a challenge unmatched no more than possibly a half-dozen times in human history. In the significance for the white peoples in their relation to the colored peoples, history offers no parallel.

Will this challenge prove to be a stimulus, to which we respond in a creative manner, pulling ourselves to the next higher ledge of civilization, as Toynbee says? Or are the Communists the "maggots

## CHALLENGE AT MID-CENTURY

in the carcass of a dead civilization"? If this challenge is to give the teeming millions of the world a basis for choice, we must make a response, it seems to me, that meets these conditions, constituting an alternative: First, it must be dynamic. Second, it must offer hope for enduring peace.

It must be dynamic in two senses. First, it must be energized, active, challenging to the imagination, and capable of commanding allegiance. Second, it must exhibit responsiveness to change, a retention of the good of the past and an evolution to the better of the future.

In the first sense of dynamism, the response must offer a program; it must point a direction. If the millions of the earth are on the move, they want to be going somewhere. Men do not unite, and have no reason to do so, unless they agree to action in common, toward a common goal. One of the strongest appeals of the totalitarian regimes is their dynamic quality, or the appearance of that quality because of the strenuousness of the life imposed. Many regarded fascism as the one dynamic force in Europe in 1939. Many others now regard communism as the one dynamic force. A Europe that has been ruminating on the charges of its own decadence and drift may well be enamored of that which is pulsating with a life of direction. Communism is a much more potent adversary than fascism because it is professedly forward-looking, however ancient many of its tyrannies may be. We shall therefore have to be on our mettle in formulating an effective response.

A significant clue is found in the fact that man in society is guided by something outside himself. Always he has appealed to something greater than himself, sometimes supernatural and sometimes secular—a moral code and a self-enveloping program in common with his fellows. But man today, Ortega y Gasset wrote in 1933, speaking of European man in particular, no longer has a moral code and an engaging common program. He is "living without imperatives" and on "confined air." Life has "become scandalously provisional." Prophetically, Ortega went on to say, almost two decades ago: "Before long there will be heard throughout the planet a formidable cry, rising like the howling of innumerable dogs to the stars,

asking for someone or something to take command, to impose an occupation, a duty. . . . To command is to give people something to do, to fit them into their destiny, to prevent their wandering aimlessly about in an empty, desolate existence." Therefore, to give European man his individual direction and his social goal, Ortega proposed the unification of Europe so that spreading wings would not beat frustratingly against the bars of cages grown too small.

But technological wings are breaking the bars of too-small cages already. The problem is for the world citizen, not merely the European. As a matter of fact, Ortega's essential goal may well be reached more quickly when extricated from the age-old tensions of Europe. It is, therefore, somewhat less than audacious to suggest that a program for the establishment of world government can give mankind the gigantic human enterprise that can captivate imaginations, consume energies, give direction, elicit participation, and otherwise constitute a moral equivalent of communism—an alternative of sufficient dynamism to herald a new call to action, to lift men out of themselves, and to restore a code of morality befitting our human brotherhood. In this way democratic industrialism can be dynamic.

Democratic industrialism also needs to be dynamic in the second sense, in the sense of amenability to change. We should not assume that every other people will want to be carbon copies of ourselves. We had better assume, instead, that we can make ourselves more attractive by a little effort. To some peoples we are an Uncle Shylock and a Mr. Moneybags, more dangerous because of our wealth than the Soviet Union because of its ideas. We had better stand before a full-length mirror to see ourselves as others see us, to see if, as the Communists allege, industrial democracy really does have a double chin. It is not enough to say that salvation lies in "free enterprise" or "capitalism." On the contrary, these terms are now fraught with such connotations of mammon and imperialism, whether deserved or not, that they are a positive liability in most of the world. They carry not dynamic but archaic overtones.

We had better get it on the record that industrial democracy does



## CHALLENGE AT MID-CENTURY

not mean conventional or classical capitalism. Capitalism so conceived is dead in Europe. It never existed in the Orient. Its glamour cannot be revived anywhere. It will never be embraced by the world masses. As a banner, it can no longer arouse allegiance.

We had better get it on the record that industrial democracy is a flexible system, a flexible system of meeting human needs by means freely agreed upon by the citizens, producers and consumers, themselves. It has no answer for all time. It has answers as needs and desires determine. It is dynamic but not dogmatic. It is the tool of no one but the recipients of its services. It is not an end in itself but a means to whatever end the majority wants. It is not merely the economic system we now see about us but a method by which that system may be changed as desired. It can be as private as the United States economy or as public as the British economy so long as policies are democratically made and controls are democratically exercised. If the public interest requires a drastic change, a drastic change can be made. Democratic industrialism means not only a democracy that is industrialized but also an industrialism that is democratized.

Finally, we had better get it on the record that democratic industrialism is not exclusively materialistic. It does not consist exclusively of radios, motion pictures, automobiles, refrigerators, electric blankets, ticker tape, boxcar loadings, corporation dividends, Wheaties, Kleenex, and pastel bathtubs. It will take something more to appeal to peoples who cast strange and unbelieving eyes on the cult of the private bath and on the prestige of the two-car garage. We should realize and lead the rest of the world to realize that these products are only a demonstration of our industrial strength and our technological genius, in which we of course take immense pride, but to which we are eager to append equally dramatic evidences of human, humane, and spiritual values. Otherwise we offer to the Hindus, Mohammedans, Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesians no alternative to the Red Star system in which working girls write poetry to factory machines and young men fall in love with production curves.

In these ways democratic industrialism can be dynamic, can



offer a challenging alternative to communism. As stated at the outset, the alternative must also offer hope for enduring peace. That hope is implicit in the world organization previously suggested, but that leads to the second great challenge.

That is the challenge, at mid-century as never before, of tearing the bloody threads of war from the fabric of society. This challenge, while second as a matter of popular interest, really supersedes the Communist challenge in first importance because the solution to the war problem would contain the Communist problem, whereas the reverse is not true. Some say any attack on the war challenge is playing Don Quixote with the windmills. I disagree. What we have done within nations we can do between nations. We have only to cap the sheaf, to insert the keystone. We know the essential ingredients of peace. As in the nation so in the world, it will take a system by which law is recognized or created, by which disputes can be settled, and by which the law and the decisions under the law can be implemented by force if necessary. Law must have sanctions; the weight of opinion must also be the weight of force. No sanctions, no force, can exist except through organization. Since the force must transcend the individual nations, the organization must be international.

We are fortunate in having a graphic object lesson before us in the recent experience of the United Nations, which has, momentarily at least, risen to new heights by virtue of its use of world force behind a world policy in Korea. But candor requires us to admit that this success rests on a shifting foundation. The United Nations acted in the crucial area, the area of force, not so much on its own initiative as on the initiative of the United States. The United Nations in world history is at the stage of the Continental Congress in United States history. It is without its own police force, relying on voluntary contributions. This is a tragic anachronism in a world of supersonic weapons. We have, therefore, the challenge of establishing an effective world government equipped with its own system of law enforcement and organized to throw the preponderance of world opinion and world force behind its decisions on breaches of the peace. Someone may say it is impracticable. But who has less

## CHALLENGE AT MID-CENTURY

regard for what is practicable than those who persist in relying on the old techniques conclusively shown to be inadequate? In a world in which most men live to see three wars, it should be apparent that to liquidate our enemies of the moment is no real solution. We had better, therefore, press on with renewed vigor toward the goal we shall eventually have to reach, war or no war, solidly organizing all willing confederates but leaving the door open to those who tardily substitute discretion for valor. To be diverted when conflict seems imminent is to overlook the fact that war itself is the real diversion.

Rumor has it that the gigantic mushroom which blossomed over Hiroshima in 1945 was really the vaporization of the idea of national sovereignty. If so, perhaps the old legend will come true: the phoenix will truly arise from the ashes to build a better world. It can do so only through effective world government. The revitalized United Nations is an encouraging step on that road, entitled to enthusiastic support from all of us, but it is a snare and a delusion if it leads us to think in the long run that this little is enough.

The third great challenge is the challenge of preserving the creative role of the individual in an ever expanding state. Although this is an old problem, it never before took on the current complexion induced by government in business, government subsidies to great segments of the economy, and government services to millions of people, indeed to all of us in varying degrees. To preserve the creative role of the individual it is not necessary to turn back the clock or to call a halt to all forward progress; but it is necessary to preserve the old ways and to find new ways of criticism, of control, and of citizen participation. Therefore, the challenge becomes in considerable measure a challenge on civil liberties, which are now under attack born of the current ideological hysteria.

In our uneasiness about national security, we are inclined to "play it safe" by resorting to the suppression of political ideas. We are now facing the acid test. Liberal notions of free speech and assembly are easy to live with so long as no group rises up menacingly enough to alarm us seriously. Justice Holmes, however, cautioned us that what counts is "not free thought for those who agree with us but freedom for the thought that we hate." How

strongly we are tempted to ignore that advice is apparent in almost any daily newspaper. Some persons propose the outlawry of the Communist party. Some urge imprisonment of leftists on technical grounds that only thinly disguise a desire to put dangerous ideas behind bars. A great organization's national convention recently called for taking all Communists into custody immediately "for reasons of national security," with trial as traitors to follow. This is a sample of the advocacy of "preventive" justice—unfortunately not confined to Communists—based on what someone *might* do if he had a chance as inferred from his spoken ideas or from the kind of company he keeps. Finally, most revealing of the crisis of ideas and our unwillingness to let them compete freely for acceptance, other persons indulge in drawing intellectual Maginot lines known as loyalty oaths for teachers.

It is sobering to remember that De Tocqueville set down as one of the shining stars in the constellation of America the fact that this nation had stood alone in the world for fifty years without a single imprisonment for political ideas. That was one hundred fifteen years ago. Is there still merit in this uniqueness? Or shall some new De Tocqueville record that America, coming of age, became hypersensitive and panicky, like its progenitors? The challenge ahead is to distinguish between ideas and overt acts—to punish for the latter as the law requires, but not to punish or suppress for the ideas. The power to forbid acts, as Justice Jackson has said, does not include the power to forbid contemplation of them. If there is no refuge and no freedom for the individual even in the privacy of his own mind, then the state has become a Frankenstein monster, as horrible as the state in George Orwell's novel, *1984*.

This is not a matter for dogmatism. We shall have to proceed with caution, calm, and forbearance. That makes the challenge all the greater. Every state is entitled to take steps toward its survival. If communism were a serious force, in numbers, as in some European countries, and if a Communist-inspired war seemed imminent on our borders, we might have to strike a new balance on the scale of freedom and control; but it would be unwise to do *now* what one can conjure up as the requirements of tomorrow's new circum-



## CHALLENGE AT MID-CENTURY

stances. Even at that stage, while the suppression of action might provide temporary security, the strangling of ideas could not change the situation a particle. The ideas will have to be met on their own terms, by their own media, in the realm of faith, intellect, and conviction.

It is a curious bit of irony that those who have fallen into a frenzy for restricting liberties are almost invariably those who profess the greatest abhorrence of government and its tendency to encroaching power. They want government controlled, kept in its place, limited. It is, therefore, another of the challenges of our times to show that government cannot possibly be checked and controlled unless individuals and groups are left free to criticize, to suggest, to condemn, and to propose disagreeable alternatives. Otherwise, what is the source of control? If repression dries up the expression of public opinion, both by individuals and groups, what does government take its cues from? What is its base? Whence come its policies? The foundation is gone.

Only by keeping the channels of freedom of criticism open can the individual convert society to change, and society changes only by such conversion at the hands of individuals. The individual must be left islands of safety from state interference. His citizenship does not mean full-time devotion to the state. Instead, he must be kept free from excessive service, permitting him to pursue his vocation, to enjoy his leisure, to attend union meetings, to read books, to tend his garden, to worship in the church of his choice, and to fraternize with his lodge brothers. These are values required by the human spirit, and therefore the basis of meeting the challenge of creative individuality within the expanding state.

A fourth challenge is that of developing sufficient administrative competence for the tasks ahead. The expanding government which complicates the role of the individual is also the government which accentuates the problems of administration. Woodrow Wilson once observed that it is easier to form a government than to run one. Political newcomers, from Bolsheviks and Fabians to the isolated reformer, have always learned that the attainment of power is but a dramatic prelude to the prosaic business of bringing promises to



pass by day-to-day administration. Demanding more of government means demanding more of administration. The general acceptance of that fact would aid the search for an improved art and science of administration. It would rid us of the witch doctors who really want to cut out the organs rather than treat the disease. The administrative state, with an increasingly administered economy, calls for the best talents of organization, the best arts of human relations, and the greatest capacity of generalization possessed by man. It threatens to place an infinitude of variables on finite minds for co-ordination and decision. To keep administrative techniques abreast of governmental tasks is a challenge for layman and expert acting together, with more dedication and understanding than heretofore exhibited.

Finally, a fifth challenge is found in man's ignorance of man, particularly man as a social being. Curiously enough, a good part of man's history is the history of man's neglect of man himself. The challenge is to get man himself back into the center of attention. In human relations we are at the stage of medical science in cancer research: we must first find causes and specifics before we can prescribe medicine. We, therefore, must be as energetic in perfecting social skills as we have been in perfecting the sciences of material things—and also as generous. We need to embark on a social and humanistic program of research and education of unprecedented proportions, something that will stagger the imaginations of those who are now content to let the sciences of man feed from the crumbs dropped from the tables of the sciences of things. We need no relaxation in scientific research, to be sure, but we need to bring social institutions abreast of the responsibilities science is placing upon them. Of course we want better petroleum products, but we want, if possible, to know how to keep them in our motorcars rather than in General Sherman tanks. Of course we want more knowledge of nuclear physics, but we want, if possible, to know how to keep our uranium in peacetime power plants rather than in wartime packages of death for 100,000 persons at a time. Of course we want bigger and better machines, but we want to know how to utilize them as a boon to man, rather than as a source of his exploitation. Of

## CHALLENGE AT MID-CENTURY

course we want improved industrial techniques, but we want to know how to use them without plundering our irreplaceable natural resources to the irreparable loss of all succeeding generations. Of course we want to perfect our production of wealth, but we want to know how to avoid getting caught in that backlash of pseudo progress which brings recurring depressions.

In a world as dependent as ours on complicated human relationships and on public enterprises, we must know more about man, about the administration of his affairs, and about the human applications of science. The omission of any direct word about the atom may seem strange in a discussion of critical issues at mid-century, but the omission is deliberate. The atom does not present a special issue. It creates an immense urgency, but there is no hope of solution out of the context of the five problems already discussed. We need less human subordination to the atom and more atomic subordination to man. It is the atom of society that needs increased attention.

The challenge at mid-century, as stated at the outset, calls for a creative response to those ideas, forces, and actions that threaten to deprive man of his fullest fruition. The challenging forces have, and always will have, every advantage. It requires no great skill to take hold of the loose ends of civilization and unravel the whole fabric, but it takes ingenuity and imagination to pick up the loose strands and continue weaving, with sufficient creativity for *new* patterns for *new* needs in a *new* era. That is the real challenge at mid-century.

## *Three Poems*

THEODORE MORRISON

### LOST REVOLUTION

What brought him to his end?  
Rich as he was in reader, foe, and friend,  
Disciples, influence, energy to work,  
Why did he seize what comes to those who wait?  
Upon a darkening world that would not bend  
To his austere demands on time and state  
Some would have put the blame.  
And true enough, he was always one of those  
Who will not settle, like a passive clerk,  
For the mere fragment of a claim.  
Men of inordinate aim,  
They see the total justice to create,  
And lo, the hour is late.  
Tomorrow the corrupted house will fall.  
Nothing will do but all.  
So generous hope prepares the tragic close.

He tried to be too much for the world's sake,  
Bullied the seething mix of things to take  
In one gift Christ and peace and socialism.  
The prophet of his country's art,  
He read and wrote with hungry dogmatism,  
Impatient to remake  
His people by the rebellious constitution  
Their mystics and dissenters had laid down,  
Those who had dreamed equalities more just

### THREE POEMS

Than any granted yet to human dust  
And still had seen their glorious revolution  
Fall short, though it made many a hopeful start.  
And then, for all the work and all the hope,  
He saw the unstaunched world split wide apart,  
And while its ragged halves began to grope  
Like murderous Ur-men for the deadly hold,  
Some thought him all too ready to love those  
Who made themselves our foes.  
It may be that he felt the fatal cold  
As the divided world went stair by stair  
One further time down toward the pit of war,  
And that the breath of that uncanny air  
Touched him with irredeemable despair.  
The wonder is it has not touched us more.  
It may be that he stood confused at last,  
So many unpopular weapons in his hands  
That contradiction fixed and held him fast  
Till useless ardor dried up in his glands  
And stubborn as his energy had been  
The world's course left him nowhere to strike in.

There is always an occasion for the end.  
To such as he occasion could not lack.  
Yet every end has been prepared far back.  
The private man prepares the public man,  
The public to the private self reverts.  
The buried self will break through where it can;  
If need be, through the scars of early hurts.  
He tried to be too much for the world's sake,  
Or did he for his own sake ask the world  
To be more than it could or meant to be?  
An antique Roman or a Japanese  
Might for a loss of honor take his life  
With grave dispassion, all his faculties  
At poise and well; but in our modern West,



## THEODORE MORRISON

Though many have been careless how they died,  
Despite our striving and our self-unrest  
We keep our canon against suicide.  
Here was a man with neither child nor wife,  
Nor love for woman, if report was true.  
The words he left for friend and foe to view  
Betrayed the twin poles of his final thought,  
One pole the world, still bloody and untaught  
By prophet and by martyr, and the other  
That first, forbidden, kinder world, his mother  
Longed for across the unhealed long ago.  
What more is there to ask, what more to know?

Then do not use his death to mourn the world.  
Take the great world as best  
By courage or by luck you can or will,  
Laugh, grieve, be patient, hold the good or ill  
Close to your breast,  
Act or abstain, love, hate, or turn aside.  
The world goes on, some blood at every stride,  
Some kindness and some careless joy as well.  
Mourn him, mourn the spoiled self, the sick cell  
For whose inordinate need  
No one could intercede.  
Mourn that in him the fountain broke and fell.  
We are all egos, ones and I's, few whole,  
Few integers, all incomplete; but most  
Can bear their incompleteness, or make shift  
By marriage or ambition to console  
That aching in the ghost  
And partly hide the rift.  
What is the sick soul but the incomplete  
Who cannot bear his half-life, cannot be  
One body among bodies, mind among minds,  
But on the unfriendly world's diversity  
Looks forth and finds

### THREE POEMS

Only the deadly omens of defeat?  
We are all universes at the start,  
Self-islands, each the sum  
Of all things to itself; by growth we come  
To bump and scrape on other juts of coast,  
And humbled by discovery  
Diminish ourselves and learn a smaller part.  
The sick self cannot make that saving fall.  
It asks the world at large  
To be the docile body of its thought,  
And meeting with the stubborn world's resistance  
Bites at its own existence.  
The all so tainted, let there be no all!  
Each man lives loaded with that early charge  
The self, whose wholeness is a thing hard bought.  
The best of revolutions may forget  
That early self, but it will claim its debt.

It seemed that he was happier toward the end.  
He smiled and joked, yet it was with a look  
Shy, oddly watchful, patiently unsparing,  
And if he showed at last an easier bearing  
What was it but the private leave he took,  
The secret happiness of knowing  
That all his faculties were bent on going?  
It was the malignant cunning of his plan  
That had grown up like cancer or like coral,  
Deposit by deposit, shell by shell,  
His plot to quench his quarrel  
With the intractable world and blundering man,  
With the all-self, with enemy and friend.  
All was perversely well,  
And so, one Sunday morning, in his car,  
Through the parochial circles of the bell  
That over his church began  
Familiar hymns to call the sheep inside,

## THEODORE MORRISON

He drove, it seemed extravagantly far,  
But to his chosen site,  
And stopped and got out at the great bridge-span.  
He hauled his scholar's legs up painfully  
On the rail's awkward height  
And tottered in the clumsy wind and clawed,  
Then lunged and slewed and flapped outrageously  
Two hundred feet or more  
To smack the roil of the outrunning tide,  
Drowning, and with him drowning peace and war  
And all things flawed  
With fever and self-strife,  
Drowning "to be," drowning the verb of life.

## A MAKER OF DISCIPLES

The rule was to be soft and circumspect  
Or he would stun the slyest hint of schism  
With the brass clapper of his dogmatism.  
And so he made disciples. Gifted boys,  
Warped to his likeness and yet less than he,  
Spent half a painful lifetime warping free.  
He had the teacher's talent that destroys  
The weak whom it can influence. The strong  
Grew by opposing him. If he was wrong,  
Still he could claim their tribute of respect.  
No doubt the applauding little minds that grew  
To little rods of stiffness at his spell  
Would have aped other masters just as well,  
And much they got from him was not untrue.  
It was the very justice of his view,

### THREE POEMS

Sharp, partial, and relentless, that made truth  
More harmful than mere error. Who was he  
To cut all cloth to his own narrow trim,  
To sow his lessened image everywhere  
And not to recognize in unformed youth  
A field of nature and chance faculty  
That had the right to prove itself, not him?  
Good masters dread their own ascendancy,  
And with due care, yet self-withholding care,  
Let free minds learn, because their own are free.

### WITH KINGS AND COUNSELORS

Through small, worn lips, lips that were like a hole  
In an old leather purse, he used to say:  
"We're going to have a little place someday,  
A place where all the folks we like can meet."  
His voice would vanish inward till it stole  
Through muted pipes down to his very feet.  
"Things keep us all apart. We'll have a place  
Where we can be together, I don't know where,  
But it will be somewhere." The well-loved theme  
Would bring his breath out in a tiny snort  
While vast affections troubled his broad face.  
We smiled at his old, simple, human dream,  
And yet the transit to that place is short  
And he has made the passage, he is there.



# TENNYSON AT LEYTE GULF

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*by Frederick L. Gwynn*

**E**VEN in the air age, it is a long way from the Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea to the waters east of Luzon in the Philippine Islands. But a strange concatenation of events occurring ninety years apart—to the day—links these places in justification of Shelley's sweeping dictum that poets are "the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire . . .," and in contradiction of Auden's dogmatism that "poetry makes nothing happen . . . ." For involved in Admiral Halsey's charge south on October 25, 1944, in the Battle for Leyte Gulf is the charge of Major General Lord Cardigan's Light Brigade on October 25, 1854, in the Battle of Balaclava. And between the two actions stands Alfred Tennyson's dactylic jingle, "The Charge of the Light Brigade," as a tenuous but surprisingly effective link.

October 25 is a day not unknown to previous junctures of sword and pen—or at least, of longbow and pen. For it is the Feast Day of SS. Crispin and Crispinian, as Shakespeare pointed out, the day on which King Henry V of England led his small band of tired and hungry archers to rout a superior French army at Agincourt in 1415. But only a happy few know Shakespeare's passage about St. Crispin's Day, compared to the multitude familiar with Tennyson's lines about another October 25 four centuries after Agincourt. Every literate Englishman and American knows that six hundred soldiers, with cannon to their left and right, charged three half-leagues onward into the Valley of Death, while all the world wondered. And while most Americans could not define a league or a light brigade, or tell you when and where the charge took place, they have the metrical phrases and the heroic atmosphere immutably fixed in the recesses of their memory.

The story of just why the Light Brigade rode into the valley, of how all the world wondered, and of the Poet Laureate's deep emo-

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tional reaction to the news of the sacrifice is still an entrancing tale.\*

In 1854 a British Expeditionary Force, along with French and Turkish allies, was fighting the Russians on the Crimean Peninsula. By late October the English were sick and short of supplies; with a dangerous Eastern winter† coming on, they were well aware of their failure to take the crucial fortress of Sebastopol on the west shore. Lord Raglan, the British commander, had to defend a dirty little village on the south shore—Balaclava—for it was his supply base and could not be lost to the enemy. A cavalry unit, under Lord Lucan, was Raglan's main force; it consisted of Sir James Scarlett's Heavy Brigade (heavily armed and protected horsemen) and Lord Cardigan's Light Brigade. There were also the Scottish 93rd Highlanders, under Sir Colin Campbell.

The Highlanders were the first British troops to distinguish themselves in the Battle of Balaclava. Early on the morning of October 25, some 25,000 Russian soldiers advanced on the town. "You must die where you stand," Sir Colin told his regiment, placing it in the famous "thin red line" of two men deep. Two volleys from this line's guns temporarily broke up the Russian cavalry, but the enemy soon came on again. Then, for no apparent reason, it paused. The lapse was but one of many on the part of General Ivan Liprandi, the Russian commander.

By this time General Scarlett had his 900-horse Heavy Brigade in position, and he ordered a charge—uphill—against 2,900 Russian cavalry. In just eight minutes the Heavy Brigade (led by the 300 Dragoons celebrated in Tennyson's less-known poem) had repulsed the superior force.

Now, Lord Raglan could see all this taking place. He and the allied French commanders, their staffs, and the war correspondents—including the renowned jingoist W. H. "Billy" Russell of the

\* My account comes from the *London Times* (November 1854); Alexander Kinglake, *The Invasion of the Crimea* (1868), Vol. IV; Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn, *The Crimea in Perspective* (1935); and C. E. Vulliamy, *Crimea: the Campaign of 1854-56* (1939).

† The severity of that winter of 1854-55 is attested even today by the existence of the "raglan" overcoat, the "cardigan" sweater, and the "Balaclava" face-helmet. Even the beards which we associate with mid-Victorian faces were grown during a fad of imitating the unshaven heroes of the Crimea.

London *Times*—were all comfortably ensconced on Sapoun Ridge, looking down on the mile-long valley. It was like a seat on the fifty-yard line: when the Highlanders and the Heavy Brigade harried the enemy, the party on Sapoun Ridge cheered them on.

But Lord Raglan saw that the Russians were far from defeated. Indeed, they still held the redoubts on the hills that formed the valley, and Raglan apparently spotted evidences of gun movement there which the English cavalry down in the valley could not see.

And so the notorious Order No. 4 went down to Lord Lucan. It was written by Colonel Richard Airey, Lord Raglan's Quartermaster General, and delivered on horse by Airey's aide-de-camp, Captain Louis Nolan. It was a monstrously vague order: "Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. Troop of horse-artillery may accompany. French cavalry is on your left. Immediate." The order failed to locate either the front, which was so plain to the general staff and spectators on Sapoun Ridge, or the guns, or—accurately—the French cavalry.

So far as we can tell from the testimony later presented to Parliament, Captain Nolan came dashing up to Lord Lucan with a great flourish of eagerness and an air of immediacy. Lucan read Order No. 4. Then he looked up the valley, at the end of which General Liprandi had placed cavalry and a dozen guns, and—seeing no Russian movement of "carrying away" cannon—asked Nolan for the location of the guns. The junior officer, who was famous in the Army for sanguineness and high spirits, foolishly lost his temper; pointing vaguely up the valley instead of at the adjacent hills, he spouted: "There, my Lord, is your enemy; there are your guns!"

Quite naturally, the cavalry leader became angry too. But since he had to accept Nolan as a direct representative of the commanding general, Lucan got the notion that there was pressure on him to attack immediately and at all cost. He rode over to Lord Cardigan, commander of the Light Brigade, and in another vague conversation passed on the orders. Cardigan pointed out to his chief that there were Russian guns on both sides of the valley and that it would be dangerous to risk an attack. Lord Lucan pointed out that Lord



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Raglan had ordered the cavalry to go forward. Soldiers obey; theirs not to reason why.

A little after 11:00 A.M. Lord Cardigan gave the tragic order to his Light Brigade. Placing himself in the front of the lines, he led the troop into the valley. His eye was on the Russian positions over a mile distant.

At this moment a further and dramatic misunderstanding occurred. Cardigan was surprised and annoyed to see Captain Nolan suddenly gallop across the path of the whole Brigade, screaming like a madman. He may have been joining in the charge; it is more likely that he was trying to divert the horsemen toward the guns on the hills to the right—apparently the target meant by Lord Raglan. But Nolan never lived either to warn Cardigan or to explain his actions of the day. A piece of Russian shrapnel struck and killed him as the Light Brigade's gait quickened into a gallop.

Into the jaws of death and the mouth of hell rode six hundred other horsemen. And, as Tennyson's line hyperbolizes, "All the world wonder'd." For up on Sapoun Ridge it was plain to all that the sortie could end only in massacre. As the gallery gazed and stood aghast, General Bosquet shook his head and summed up the catastrophic Charge with Gallic gnomism: "*C'est magnifique*," he said, "*mais ce n'est pas la guerre*."

The guns of the Russian artillery and infantry on both sides of the valley threw iron at the moving body of resolute cavalry. Then the cannon at the end of the valley began firing point-blank at them. Soon the aisle was a mélange of fallen men and riderless horses. But Lord Cardigan never looked back until he had ridden (at a pace which he coolly estimated at seventeen miles an hour) into the smoke of the guns at the far reach of the valley. When he finally wheeled about, he found himself separated from the bulk of the Light Brigade, and he saw it retreating. Miraculously spared, he followed back out of the Valley of Death. The whole charge and retreat lasted about twenty minutes.

Once more the Russians mysteriously failed to take advantage of their superiority, and the remnants of the Brigade were able to return to their own lines and muster. Of the 673 men who had



charged, only 195 were still horsed. Two hundred forty-seven had been killed or wounded. Through a series of ambiguous orders, unintelligent transmission of orders, and specific tactical errors (for example, advancing a cavalry unit without support)—on the part of the commander-in-chief Raglan, the Quartermaster General Airey, the aide-de-camp Nolan, the cavalry commander Lucan, and finally the single-minded commander of the Light Brigade Cardigan—an extremely dangerous, fatal, and totally unnecessary attack had been made. Lives of men paid for errors in communication and precipitate actions. Someone—in fact, a fairly large number of responsible men—had indeed blundered.

Yet the Charge itself was glorious. Like the British longbowmen at Agincourt, the British cavalry at Balaclava met a foe far superior in numbers and tactical position. Yet there was no faltering on anyone's part. Even Lord Cardigan, an impossible man who quartered himself aboard his private yacht in the harbor while his troops suffered privation ashore, lived up to the oldest tradition of military men by immediately obeying the order as he understood it, even though it meant leading his horsemen into the cannon's mouth. Legend says that when he apologized to his depleted Brigade after the Charge, the men replied, "Never mind, my Lord! We are ready to go again!" Despite the stupidity of the Charge itself, the reply is undeniably noble. The British have made it, aloud or implicitly, a number of times before and since.

According to Tennyson's son and grandson,\* it was little over a month later (December 2, 1854) that the Poet Laureate sat down with a newspaper and read a report of the Battle of Balaclava. As an Englishman and as a poet he was profoundly moved. His vivid metrical sense lighted on the phrase "some one had blundered," and in a few minutes he had written the famous poem. He sent the jingling verses to the *Examiner*, a weekly magazine, where they appeared on December 9 over the signature "A. T."

Four years before, Ralph Waldo Emerson had commented on Tennyson's amazing popularity. The morning after the Laureate

\* See *Alfred Lord Tennyson: a Memoir by His Son* (1897), I, 381, 386; Charles Tennyson, *Alfred Tennyson* (1949), pp. 283-84, 288-89.

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sends a poem to a periodical, Emerson wrote in his journal, "it is reprinted in all the newspapers, and, in the course of a week or two, it is as well known all over the world as the meeting of Hector and Andromache in Homer."<sup>†</sup> (Better known, we would have to say.)

"The Charge of the Light Brigade" bore out Emerson's words with a vengeance. All over the world people read, recited, memorized, and repeated the poem. Lesser poets, like Julia Ward Howe in America, imitated it. Lesser men than Cardigan's sat in homes, schools, and lyceums responding to Alfred Tennyson's stark recreation of the original nightmare. Perhaps the poem's popularity in the United States owes much to its inclusion as a declamation piece, complete with gestures and intonations, in Epes Sargent's widely circulated *Intermediate Standard Speaker* (1857).<sup>\*</sup> It is not too much to say that every schoolboy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has known Lord Tennyson's dramatic ode.

Ninety years after the Battle of Balaclava—to the day—a line in Tennyson's poem influenced an important decision in the largest naval engagement of all time, the Battle for Leyte Gulf. In the three days of October 23–26, 1944, the United States Navy sank twenty-eight ships of the Imperial Japanese Fleet, ending Japan's claim to being a modern sea power. Of all the myriad decisions necessary to fighting this battle, none is more dramatic than one in which the echo of a Victorian poem, written to celebrate what was after all a minor incident in a comparatively minor international altercation, crept into the brains of two men, tempering and coloring a reversal of military plans affecting thousands of American and Japanese soldiers and sailors.

The Battle for Leyte Gulf was an immensely complicated conflict. Every type of naval craft—from submarines to airplanes, from battleships to torpedo boats—took part in this struggle for the vital Philippine Islands. It was really several separate battles in one, some occurring simultaneously in widely separated areas.

<sup>†</sup> *Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes (1912), VIII, 140 (October 1850, undated).

<sup>\*</sup> See John Olin Eidson, *Tennyson in America: His Reputation and Influence from 1827 to 1858* (1943), p. 103.

A brief summary of the events surrounding the incident in which Tennyson figures must oversimplify an almost imponderable series of decisions, orders, and engagements.\* But the main outlines are clear.

Soon after the American landing on Leyte Island on October 20, 1944, the Japanese Fleet threaded its way toward where the United States Navy roved in support of General Douglas MacArthur. Split into three units—the Southern, Central, and Northern Forces—the enemy was engaged by our Third and Seventh Fleets and our submarines.

The total destruction of twenty-eight Japanese ships at the expense of six American—which turned out to be a tonnage ratio of about nine to one—was possibly the biggest major naval defeat in history. And one cannot attribute this defeat to inferior Japanese strategy, sea power, or gunnery. It was the lack of co-ordination, the abject failure of communications, and the fact that Admiral Kurita (commander of the Central Force) retired at a time when he held the advantage that conspired to point up the superior power and courage and luck of the United States Fleet.

Yet the lapses were not all on the Japanese side. The most dramatic and ironic defection occurred at the juncture of the famous northern thrust and reversal south of Fleet Admiral (then Admiral) William F. Halsey, Jr. A mnemonic irrelevance and error in taste on the part of radio communicators misled the Admiral into making what he has maintained was his only mistake in the long and complicated battle.

Halsey's Third Fleet, according to the Operations Plan which Fleet Admiral Chester A. Nimitz had given it, had two missions: (1) It was, of course, to support and protect General MacArthur's landing on the Philippine Islands. (2) But further orders in the Op Plan followed traditional Navy doctrine in stating: "In case opportunity for destruction of major portions of the enemy fleet offers or can be created, such destruction becomes the primary task."

\* See James A. Field, Jr., *The Japanese at Leyte Gulf: the Sho Operation* (1947); Fleet Admiral W. F. Halsey, Jr., and Lieutenant Commander J. Bryan III, *Admiral Halsey's Story* (1947); Vann Woodward, *The Battle for Leyte Gulf* (1947); Captain Walter Karig and Others, *Battle Report: the End of an Empire* (1948).



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On the night of October 24 Halsey had enough information to change his mission from No. 1 to No. 2. His pilots had hit the Japanese Central Force and reported it badly damaged, its battle efficiency impaired. Other pilots had finally spotted an expected enemy carrier force to the north. Halsey therefore took his fast carriers and battleships up off the northernmost Philippine island to meet what he considered the major Japanese threat. In so doing he left Vice-Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid's Seventh Fleet, protected only by old battleships and small carriers, in a "temporarily tight situation" off Leyte. After Halsey went north, the Japanese Central Force—much less damaged than had been reported—made its way through San Bernardino Straits to open sea and wreaked havoc on our small carriers before foolishly turning away. To balance this beating, however, the Japanese Southern Force came through Suri-gao Straits to take an overwhelming defeat at the hands of, primarily, our old battleships. And Halsey's Third Fleet, together with the amazing American submarines, sank four carriers and three other ships of the enemy's Northern Force.

The unique tactical element in this tremendous undertaking was a group of Third Fleet warships known as Task Force 34. This unit, although it completely escaped the disaster of the Light Brigade, was subject to a confusion of location reminiscent of the confusion in orders at the Battle of Balaclava. And the reason for this misunderstanding lies in a sequence of unfortunate messages exchanged, or missed, by Halsey and Kinkaid—and by Admiral Nimitz, who was some five thousand miles away at Pearl Harbor.

About 3:00 P.M. on the twenty-fourth, two hours before he discovered the enemy Northern Force, Admiral Halsey prepared a formation of new battleships (including his own flagship *New Jersey*) and other gunnery craft, and designated the unit Task Force 34. Its first mission was to engage the Japanese Central Force if it sortied from among the islands into the open.

It so happened that in describing this plan, Halsey's message stated that the force "will be" formed. It also happened that Admiral Kinkaid intercepted this message and assumed that Task Force 34 was in the immediate process of coming into existence.



## FREDERICK L. GWYNN

He did not intercept Halsey's message two hours later, which read: "IF ENEMY SORTIES, TASK FORCE 34 WILL BE FORMED WHEN DIRECTED BY ME."

About eight o'clock that night Admiral Halsey walked into Flag Plot on the *New Jersey*, placed his finger on the chart north, and said, "Here's where we're going." Within a short time he had sent out plans to his forces and informed Kinkaid, Nimitz, and even Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King in Washington that he was "PROCEEDING NORTH WITH 3 GROUPS TO ATTACK CARRIER FORCE AT DAWN." Kinkaid and Nimitz assumed that these were carrier groups and that Task Force 34 was detached and guarding San Bernardino Straits. But it was not until after 3:00 A.M. the next morning (October 25) that Halsey plucked this unit from his Third Fleet to make it a subordinate entity. By this time he was racing north to meet the Japanese carriers.

An hour later Kinkaid radioed Halsey, "IS TASK FORCE 34 GUARDING SAN BERNARDINO STRAITS?" and Halsey received the message—two and a half hours after its transmission. Soon Halsey was getting frantic reports that Kinkaid's small carriers were under attack and needed help. These half-dozen messages explained that the enemy's Central Force had returned during the night to fire on the thin-skinned little carriers, and one dispatch said that Kinkaid's old battleships were "low in ammunition" (after the night's engagement with the Southern Force). This explanation of the predicament reached Halsey almost two hours after it had left Kinkaid's radio shack. Yet Halsey had already sent one of his carrier task groups toward the desperate Seventh Fleet.

By this time, moreover, Admiral Halsey's planes had been attacking the Northern Force for over an hour, and Task Force 34 (with the Admiral in the middle of it) had been advanced to engage the enemy at gunnery range and finish off ships damaged by the aerial attack. At ten o'clock the force was only forty-two miles from the enemy and closing fast. All hands were at concert pitch for what promised to be a major action. No one was more expectant than Halsey, whose long career in both wars had never included a surface engagement.

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At this moment a message from five-star Admiral Nimitz was presented to four-star Admiral Halsey. It was simple but powerful: "ALL THE WORLD WONDERS WHERE IS TASK FORCE 34?"\* It was one of the most unusual dispatches a combat commander on the periphery of battle could receive from a superior officer. "I was stunned as if I had been struck in the face," Halsey has said. "The paper rattled in my hands. I snatched off my cap, threw it on the deck, and shouted something that I am ashamed to remember."

To the sanguine and sensitive admiral—who had been fighting the Japanese since December 7, 1941, and who was just about to close with them point-blank at a crucial stage in the biggest naval battle of all time—Nimitz' message, with its twisted Tennysonian tag, seemed a cruelly sarcastic rebuke. Its tone implied that Halsey had made a poor disposition of his forces and that he should have been broadcasting his every move for the whole world to judge. It further implied that Halsey should turn away from his quarry (now just forty miles away!) and take Task Force 34 nearly four hundred miles to support Kinkaid's fleet, a fleet over which, in the inefficient system of divided command then still obtaining, Halsey had no jurisdiction. And in effect, the melodramatic message seemed to cancel the part of Nimitz' original operation order that most appealed to the fighting Halsey—the primary task of destroying the major portion of an enemy fleet. "For the first time in over three years of fighting," Halsey says, "we had the bird in our hand, and the pressure was on me to let it escape."

And so Halsey obediently turned around and headed south with Task Force 34 and one carrier group. He reached San Bernardino Straits after midnight. Three hours before, Admiral Kurita had ingloriously taken his Central Force back into the island seas to escape, although Halsey's pilots were able to do further damage to it in the morning.

And what of Task Force 34 itself, the powerful four battleships, five cruisers, and fourteen destroyers? In supreme irony, this unit "spent the 24 most critical hours of the three-day battle steaming

\* Dispatches must usually be paraphrased for publication. This one is reproduced verbatim by special permission of the Security Section, Office of Public Information, United States Navy.

300 miles up the coast of Luzon and 300 miles back between two enemy forces without firing a shot at either, though narrowly missing contact with both.”\* It was not only a bitter disappointment to Admiral Halsey and his subordinates; it was an unfortunate military move. One must reiterate the fact that the Admiral has described his breaking off and returning south as “the only mistake I made in the three-day battle,” although Admiral King, then commander-in-chief of the Fleet, assured him that it was not a mistake.

If it *was* error, it fortunately was not disastrous, and it was based on doctrinal obedience to Nimitz’ orders as understood. Yet one of the most interesting paradoxes of the greatest war in history is the fact that the crucial message that turned Halsey away from the Northern Force was *not* an order from Admiral Nimitz and *not* a sarcastic rebuke. It was a responsible superior’s request for information, colored by another sailor’s unconscious and unfortunate poetic reminiscence.

It was not that Admiral Nimitz, like General Wolfe before Quebec, would rather have written a famous poem than take a military objective. It was simply that one of the radio communicators at Pearl Harbor — may he ever be nameless — followed the conventional cryptographic device of padding important messages with apparent nonsense (“nulls”) to aggravate the possible task of enemy decoding. The Tennysonian “ALL THE WORLD WONDERS” was not part of Nimitz’ request. It was airy fluff designed to disguise a hard kernel of technical communication. Yet its semantic fate was to harmonize all too well with Nimitz’ question and to color Halsey’s reaction on reading it. It “sounded so infernally plausible,” Halsey has said, “that my decoders read it as a valid part of the message.” And it sounded infernally like a scolding.

The jingling of Alfred Lord Tennyson’s “Charge of the Light Brigade,” which has rung in the ears and memory of the past century, had apparently trembled in the consciousness of the encoder and burst into ether-shaking expression. Almost any other familiar line of English or American poetry would have served the purpose and not confused the issue.

\* Woodward, *The Battle for Leyte Gulf*, p. 220.

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Given the battles of Balaclava and Leyte Gulf for comparison, a military historian would probably concentrate on the inept tactics of leaders whom I have barely mentioned. Both General Liprandi, commander of the Russian force in 1854, and Admiral Kurita, commander of the Japanese Central Force in 1944, failed to press a military advantage when they held it, much to the relief of the British at Balaclava and the Americans at Leyte. The historical critic might go on to analyze the similar difficulties in communication—that omnipresent bugaboo of all warfare: how the course of battle would have changed had Lords Raglan and Lucan, Admirals Halsey and Kinkaid been in better touch with one another. Such a critic might compare the roles of Captain Nolan and the staff communicator who added such a powerful catalytic agent to Nimitz' harmless query.

But for the present, one has merely outlined the weird contrast between the earnest motives of the Poet Laureate of Victorian England in writing that poem, and the potent effect its mnemonic meter and phrase had on a war so far removed in time, space, and substance from the Crimean struggle. Poets may not be the legislators of the world, as Shelley asserted them to be, but they certainly can cause a lot of trouble.



# UNHAND THAT LILY

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*by Rosalie Moore*

AS THE TITLE of this essay implies, I dislike the attitude toward poetry which regards it as fragile stuff—something to be cherished but glassed from the ordinary use like teaware from Limoges. On the contrary, I want to emphasize the intense, the enormous vitality of poetry.

The sad part of it is that many people do not regard poetry as anything so respectable and functional as a good tea set. At least the tea set is sometimes used, although carefully and strictly. But to many, poetry has only a sentimental appeal—more like the hand-painted plates of artists agone. We might show these among understanding friends, but it would be clear to everybody that this is the sort of thing that is no longer used.

Even those who have at one time felt that poetry pertained to them and read it, or even wrote it, perhaps in college, have a tendency later to lay it aside, to save it. Actually I wonder if this is because poetry is “fragile,” or whether the readers are (sometimes) fragile. Poetry requires a more total response than many people, who have made an adjustment within a set circuit of responses, are prepared to give, or to give very often.

Truly there is verse which does not disturb the set circuit, which requires little of us and conversely has little to give. But we are not concerned with it here. Let us consider poetry at this time as it impinges on us directly: as a risk and challenge that threatens us always.

The word “risk” is chosen advisedly. In a poem the writer treats his material, whether a simple object or a complex experience, as if he were seeing it for the first time. This is a risk, if only in the sense that the total use of one’s perception is a risk, giving as it does full power to whatever image, feeling, or unexpected insight comes

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into one's focus. Comes without choice or control from him, but, of itself, comes.

It is a risk to look at an object in a different context from the usual one. An apple looks different in a bowl with other fruit than it does as part of a tree, and still more different popped in the aperture of a guitar. But an apple looks most different of all when it looks alone, that strangest and most unusual of places, not altered by any relationships.

Every relationship an object has lessens in a sense its intensity, and when all its relationships are taken away its vividness is almost shocking. You never know for sure, in poetry, how a thing is going to appear until this happens, and as identity is most formidable as well as most exciting, the risk run in meeting it fully is considerable. Or, to put it in a more usual way, the adjustment required.

After a writer has separated his material from its usual context, the static one that you see without remarking, he may if he wishes then put it back, or put it somewhere else: establishing the same relationships, or altogether new ones. But now the relationships are selected and active, as if there were actually conduits radiating between everything else in the poem and the apple, to hold it in place and give it its particular position and meaning.

The necessity of lifting the poetic material out of its familiar context in order that it may operate freely involves another sort of risk, for here the writer (and by identification the reader) exposes himself in all his fallibility. He must not only see his subject as if he had never seen it before, he must write about it as if it had never been written about before. No longer may he take comfort in the best that has been thought and said on his theme; he must ruthlessly, disrespectfully liquidate it, finding himself in the uncomfortable staring and stared-at position in which only he and his subject exist. And indeed, for the time being, that is all there is.

It is necessary to mention here that the poet's subject itself is sometimes literary, but in that case (e.g., some of Pound's cantos) the myth, the visitor out of the *Iliad*, or the landscape of another time, are treated exactly like the apple. They are wrenched free in time and place, and given an independent life of their own. This

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poet, even more than another, must beware the history of history and the culture of culture, although the history or the culture has become so much a part of his mental furniture that it is accessible to him as poetic material as directly as an object.

It has often been said that poetry makes things seem fresh which are familiar or jaded, but that has not the right emphasis. It suggests renovation: decking out an old figure in a somewhat novel rig. Poetry does not make things appear fresh so much as it actually makes them appear: does not so much make *over* as (to return to the old term for the creative process) it simply makes.

In the poetic view, everything is always falling to pieces and then being put together again in some amusing or significant way. And, in the physical and psychological sense, this is literally so. There is a small revolution going on all the time, whether you want it to or not. The poet doesn't create it, but he maintains a habit of noticing it:

There are days as natural as soil down-settling  
When it packs down bulbs, down bones, down bedrock,  
Flats, slants, shifts earth-angles; goes home.  
There are days that settle: I have heard them.  
The room slips, I stand closer to the floor—  
Changes like this.

Other times

I have sat in a pod of silence:  
Someone flings the door  
And lets the space in, lets the sea in, floods it.

These things do it,  
Or reading down a page that sheds me like water;  
Or especially people when you go among them,  
Speak, and feel within-sounds that the body hears  
As if in the chest the shake of a handful of bells  
Dissonantly sweet.

"Downsettling," published in *Spirit*

This is a very early poem, written in a class of Lawrence Hart's when the basis and function of poetry were becoming clear to me for the first time. I quote it because then I was trying to say in a poem what I am now trying to say in essay form.

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The break-up of what has crystallized: the surprise. The re-assembling into a different order: the acceptance.

The crux of poetry seems to be something parallel in its way to atomic fission: it explodes what you didn't know was divisible and reassembles it—releasing in the process a great deal of energy. At first the principle of atomic fission seemed too violent and destructive a thing for most of us to integrate as a part of our personal pattern. Later I felt that, as for myself, if I kept a satisfactory relationship to this continuous quieter explosion, which I understood, it would not be necessary to be afraid of the other. I even believe that, in the long run, there may be a question as to which has made the larger amount of noise—a question which does not seem debatable now.

There are poems in which something so commonplace that you have scarcely noticed it before suddenly comes to have a life of its own. There are poems in which an experience which one would not otherwise have is made to happen for him and in him. When more nearly will you know what flying is than in reading:

I caught this morning morning's minion,  
kingdom of daylight's doupin, dapple-dawn-drawn  
Falcon, in his riding  
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air. . . .

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS, "The Windhover"

I have found poems in which a whole universe of complicated tensions releases and is again made. The reader will find poems which do this for him, though not necessarily the same ones:

And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding  
shoulder  
Majestic . . . as a stallion stalwart, very  
violet-sweet! —  
These things, these things were here and but  
the beholder  
Wanting; which two when they once meet,  
The heart rears wings bold and bolder  
And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him  
off under his feet.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS, "Hurrahing in Harvest"



It is because poetry does fulfill so basic and vivid a role that I should like to see W. S. Gilbert's portrait of the poet as a pale young man with a lily in his hand consigned to the wastebasket, along with all portraits of people who think of poetry only as the fancy part of writing: the embroidery you can do with or do without. These people speak as if poetry were something with which to gloss over unpleasantness, to read at a funeral service or on some similar occasion when the hard facts are too bald to face comfortably.

If you have thought of poetry as the most evasive, most round-about way of saying a thing, a way of not calling a spade a spade, recall the emotional crises, the deeper experiences of your lives, and ask yourselves what tools you have had for meeting and integrating them. Here a factual approach has nothing whatever to offer. In this sense it seems to me that poetry, and the other arts, offer one of the few areas of operation in which you can actually tackle a spade at all, in that they offer a way of dealing with and adequately interpreting experience.

We do not read poetry at a funeral because it conceals death, but because it makes some attempt to meet it. It is not the sadness of the literal level that shocks us at these times so much as the inarticulateness of it, the rigidity: the sudden stop of it.

A person hypnotized by a traumatic fact, such as a death, is left staring, temporarily paralyzed. It is not weakness but force which smashes that dark mirror. Poetry frees us by making us strongly aware again of the lost person as an identity, and by placing him again in a vital set of relationships, though different from before: relationships in time, in words, in memory, in every sense and at every point in which his life has been touched by continuance.

It doesn't matter too much what people think about poets; if they want to think of poets as lily-fisted, that is no more important than a thousand other faulty generalizations. What matters is that poetry itself should be regarded as this jaded and tended flower. The epithets "effete," "ivory tower," and the like—terms in themselves protectively cliché and comfortably ill-defined—may indeed be deserved by some poets—but not, please, by poetry itself.

## UNHAND THAT LILY

Poetry itself, always more fist than lily, is a way through to the terrible yet saving reality. Poetry is a very tough commodity.

What is meant by "ivory-tower poet"? There must be ivory-tower poets, whatever one means by this, for obviously there are all kinds of writers. It seems to me, however, that some poets so designated often deserve it least.

My own definition of an ivory-tower poet would be one who writes in such a way that he protects people (notably himself) from the perpetual discovery and growth which in my estimation is poetry's chief function. Such a poet would write a poem about death which smelt of gardenias and served as a floral screen, whereas a better poet would strike the subject with as much honesty as he could, at the same time and in the process of approaching it with as much imagination as possible. In fact, when one uses his imagination dishonestly, the manipulation is usually obvious enough to make us distrust the results.

An ivory-tower poet is one who is trying to preserve values which he feels should be preserved, instead of simply trying to find out as best he can what values there are. There are many verse-writing humanists in this class, whose work shows evidence of the strain of maintaining their personal inflation. You can't be a champion of anything in poetry simply by intention, and the attempt shows an absence of positive values, a cynical distrust of the life process to which one fears to succumb.

A poet need not be an iconoclast who must change the status quo, or one who flouts tradition. More likely than not he is helping to create a new tradition, or furthering an old one—though not in a manner which his contemporaries can immediately recognize. He may even wake up some morning and find himself filling a role as spokesman for those values he most would choose. In that case he is lucky, but if he is also to be a poet, this role must overtake *him*, not he adopt *it*.

There is another definition of an ivory-tower poet which is frequently used. It is that a writer deserves respect depending upon the size of his audience, the ivory-tower poet being the one who reaches

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the relative few. I believe that nothing could be farther from the case.

I believe that poetry can be, and should be, a popular art, as well as one appealing to the most perceptive or cognizant segment of society. What it cannot be is a middle-class art, pleasing that desire in people which requires above all things not to be disturbed. Much poetry which is widely read today is protective; it is pseudo poetry coming like a hollow voice from a radio to reiterate in cliché terms the sort of generality which can be listened to without having to be realized.

It seems to me that the number of people a particular poem reaches has less to do with its value than the quality of response it receives from the people who *do* read it, the degree to which it causes in them growth and further awareness.

Further, I do not believe that the audience of the best of the "modern" poets is nearly so limited as their critics imagine. More people are indirectly affected by "The Waste Land," say, than are directly affected by a stodgy poem in some polite anthology—through the influence of other writers, in a dozen ways. In the same manner, thousands of people who will have no truck with Picasso are touched by that artist's influence—in the advertisements they look at, in the cartoons they laugh at, in the clothes they wear, or even the thoughts they think.

The difficulty of modern poetry can be an excuse for inertia on the part of the reader every bit as much as it can be an excuse for confusion and poor craftsmanship on the part of the writer. Since poetry performs so exciting a function for me, I decided long ago that it was something I was willing to put myself out to discover and meet. The question of speed of comprehension is a legitimate one, but certainly secondary—the real question being what depth of value does the poem have, once it is undertaken. Often, indeed, poems are not worth the trouble. Often they eminently are.

I remember how I struggled with the first "modern" poem I read—really read, that is, not just patronized. I had been used to a logical line through a poem; this reading of a poem put together



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by free association, and with a great many images, was hard work. At first I would read one line, or even one image, and just let it bob, like a cork in water, for a long time—until I accepted it with a sort of pleased inner purr or was forced to reject it. Sometimes I would wait minutes between lines, or pieces of lines, but I really read it. (You don't really read poetry, anyway—you masticate it.) After that, the reading of modern poetry grew increasingly pleasurable, and increasingly rapid.

At that, I didn't have to work over this first associational poem half so hard as I worked, as a sophomore in college, over Milton's *Lycidas*. What special knowledge *that* takes: knowledge of classic myths, of the poet's personal situation, of the current political scene! You get something from Milton's music and color even if you don't know Naerea from Daisy Mae, but the more you understand the frame of the poem, the greater your enjoyment. The same is true of "The Waste Land," or Pound's *Cantos*.

The ideal associational poem would be one in which line followed line, impression followed impression, in a way so apt, so psychologically and aesthetically right, that almost anyone could read it right off without having to let successive images bob like corks. The ideal modern poem also has levels of interest, so that there is something you can enjoy immediately. Its meaning may be perceived at once, without being analyzed, but further readings reveal this meaning more concretely and complexly.

One is correct if he observes that this ideal has not been approached well enough, often enough, but he is right almost any time he makes an observation that negative. If he says, further, that the bulk of contemporary poetry in the modern mode is trash, I would remind him that the same percentage of contemporary poetry in any other mode is also trash; frequently duller trash.

To say that contemporary poetry, or any poetry, is "hard" is not really accurate, because that implies a sterile sort of labor. Poetry is difficult for a number of reasons, none of them stemming from sterility.

It is difficult because it tries to interpret complex experience, because it tries to say so much, because it is jam-packed full, replete,



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running over. It is hard for you in a way that a rushing, charging river would be hard if you tried to look at all the pieces of water. So you let it go. But it does not leave you behind.

Poetry is difficult because it requires your total attention, and—if it is effective—elicits your total response. But one of its great values is that it forces you to make such a response. This is something that most of us (for the characteristic modern attitude is tentative) do not do often enough.

And how should I presume?

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?  
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon  
the beach.

I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

T. S. ELIOT, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

In short, we are afraid. We are almost morbidly aware of the vastness and complexity of the body of knowledge to be met and assimilated in the world, and of the fact that the only way to deal with it is to divide it into parts, and let experts tell us about each part. There is more to know, we keep saying, than a man can possibly integrate; what chance is there of getting a complete view of existence, let alone a stable one?

Actually, there is the same chance—the same *kind* of chance, that is—that there ever was. Even after he has explored every field of knowledge, vicariously through some mentor whose word he should take, or even if *he* has explored them—a man at the end is left standing in the middle of himself, the sea of his own experience in him, loud and demanding; this he will not escape, shut off, or give away part of.

In the arts, as in the memory—when access to it is open and full—all experience, particularly yours, is always present: it is never outmoded, formalized, put into mathematical terms, forgotten, or censored.

## UNHAND THAT LILY

As long as you keep an active participation in some one of the arts, you are never going to be convinced against your better judgment that the things you think and feel aren't so. You will find out, with greater and greater accuracy, who and what you are.

In poetry, it is true, a writer may deal with ambivalence, frustration, tentativeness, loss (e.g., the Eliot poem from which I have quoted) but he is not propelled by these negative qualities, or he could not write. He invites them in, he talks, he says "this is me." Without apology me. Shameless. As if he handed out a badge to each one of them, and it was quite immaterial to him whether they stayed or they went away.

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells,  
                each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its  
                name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves—goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,  
Crying "What I do is me: for that I came."

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS, "As kingfishers . . ."

What I do is me. For that I came.

# OUR TINIEST ADVERSARIES

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*by Windsor C. Cutting*

THE VIRUSES appear to be our tiniest living adversaries. They are smaller by far than most bacteria, and yet they cause us, if anything, greater distress. The list of human ailments caused by viruses includes the bulk of the childhood infectious diseases: measles, mumps, chicken pox, German measles. It includes several great scourges of other lands or other times: smallpox, yellow fever, influenza. It includes poliomyelitis and the common cold, although there may be other factors, still somewhat mysterious, about the latter. Lower animals are equally subject; for instance, cows get hoof-and-mouth disease, horses get encephalitis, cats get one type of pneumonia and mice another.

What are these little germs? Viruses are minute particles of which even the largest are only barely perceptible in the conventional microscope. The electron microscope pictures most very well, and it gave the first clear conception of their shape. Even before this, however, a good idea of their size had been obtained by finding the diameter of holes they would pass through in filters, and how fast they would spin down when whirled in a tremendously fast centrifuge. The very smallest, however, like the poliomyelitis virus, are almost beyond the ability of the electron microscope to resolve and are still not well characterized. Preparations of virus for study are seldom, if ever, pure, and they contain normal tissue particles as well. These are often about the size of the poliomyelitis virus, or a little smaller, and make recognition additionally difficult.

The shapes of the viruses vary surprisingly. The largest, like vaccinia, the virus we use in smallpox vaccination, are cuboidal, with a dense center area suggesting a nucleus. Others seem spherical, and if one may include the viruses which infest ordinary bacteria, one can add a strange polliwog shape in which the virus has a big head and a long tail.

A good deal is now known also about the chemical nature of the

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viruses. They resemble ordinary cells in many respects. They all contain protein and some contain carbohydrate and fat as well. A mineral—copper—has been identified in one. But so far chemical knowledge has not told exactly what they are, any more, for that matter, than it has explained the quite similar protoplasm of any cell in our own bodies.

Are they alive? The purest preparation of a virus that can be obtained and held up in a test tube is essentially dead. It does not move, it does not breathe, it does not reproduce itself or carry out any other discernible function. But, put less than a millionth of a gram in a mouse, and if it is an appropriate mouse virus, the mouse is soon full of tremendous amounts of the virus, and, a little later, dead. No dead material can reproduce itself this way. What, then, can one say about the place of the virus in life?

The most acceptable answer views the virus as a degenerate cell incomplete in itself, and so only potentially alive, but capable and eager to borrow what is necessary to complete itself. It is a little like a dry seed in a bottle. Nothing much is happening. But put it in damp ground and life springs out. The virus, however, needs not only what the seed needs, namely water and nutriment, but additionally it must borrow a bit of the host cell's factory before it can start operations.

The accompanying diagram may show how all this happens. Although it must be admitted that it is for the most part theory and hunch, and may be altered or entirely thrown out with newer bits of knowledge, it is at least today's educated guess.

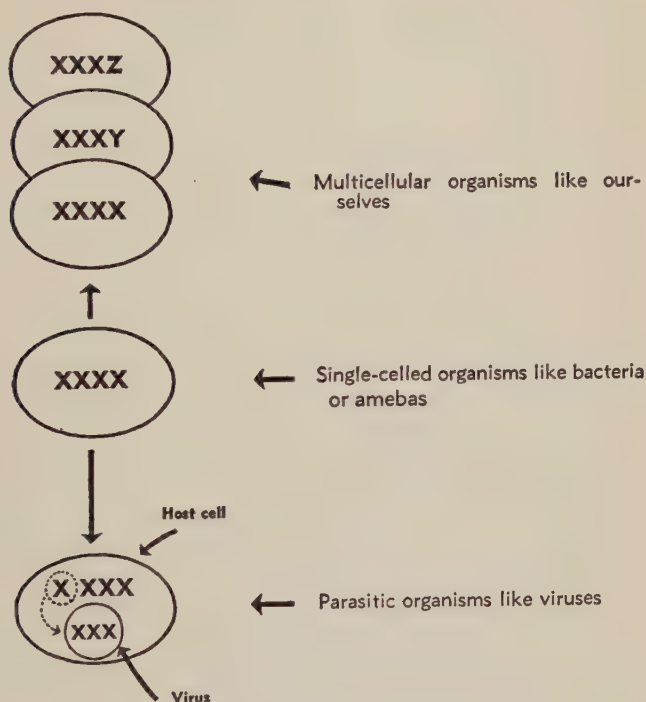
What is the relationship of viruses to other organisms? The diagram starts with the assumption that life began, long ago, with single-celled organisms, not too unlike our amebas of today. Within itself each one had the necessary manufacturing and organizing systems to keep it alive and allow it to reproduce. The biologist would call these enzyme systems. Here they are represented as X's, although, of course, there might in truth be four hundred instead of only four of these all-different but vital systems.

Finally it was found that two or three cells might fasten themselves together with some advantage, and higher life was born. In



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time, the multicellular organism became large and complicated, and each cell did not need to preserve its entire enzyme complement but could specialize a little through co-operative enterprise. Thus some cells have a Y or a Z in place of an X. Even now, however, each multicellular organism starts life as a single cell carrying all the necessary potentialities for life.



Going downgrade is different. Suppose we call it "devolution" instead of evolution. Through some quirk of fate a formerly good cell loses one of its X's. It can no longer carry on alone, and, not being part of a multicellular organism, it cannot survive by honest exchanges and co-operation with a full partner. Instead, it takes corrupt means and burrows into a normal, complete cell and bends it to its purpose. It is only then that it comes to life. In the diagram it has only three X's and must use one belonging to its host.

The power of viruses to divert normal cells to their purposes

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varies, but it is often very strong. The host cell may soon be exhausted and die, in which event the virus, now multiplied manyfold, may break out and search for new host cells. As no virus does much but reproduce itself, a function of no use to the individual whose cells are being parasitized, the luckless individual may also die if enough important cells are killed or damaged. Sometimes, the host cell survives, or the few which are killed are quickly replaced by more, and the individual recovers. Or again, what may be a tolerable permanent parasitism takes place. The host cell may not be entirely happy, but, like a barnacled ship, can still make a go of it. Many people must have the virus of fever blisters in the cells of their lips all the time, for the blisters break out on the slight provocation of a day in the sun or a little fever. Yet in between times, the cells do not appear to be impaired in any sense, and the state is almost a happy symbiosis.

The above explanation has been written as though all viruses lost a single constant enzyme or set of enzymes; such is almost surely not the case. Large viruses, like that of rabies, have probably receded very little below the organization of a normal cell and need to borrow only a trifle to become active. Others, like the very much smaller poliomyelitis, must have to borrow a great deal from the host cell and might show as only a single X in the diagram. Still smaller and more highly parasitic forms very likely exist. In fact, some might be of almost molecular size, totally invisible, and borrow entirely the energy and organization of the host. They would then contribute only the template to which the poor cell would have to bend every faculty to reproduce in multiple.

The next question is, what can be done about it? Obviously, every possible effort must be applied to understand more about viruses. Much excellent fundamental work is being done in many laboratories. Out of this knowledge some immediately practical measures can be derived.

The first practical antiviral process is immunity. It may surprise some to realize that the most successful immunizing process against viruses is not a product of twentieth-century medicine. It is still

Jenner's translation of dairy folklore into science. The only other immunizing process which is of anywhere nearly equal merit is vaccination against yellow fever, which is, however, a product of modern research. Vaccination after exposure to rabies and vaccination against influenza are a poor third and fourth, the latter of no merit against presently circulating strains of influenza virus.

All the immunizing processes just mentioned are active; that is, when an altered and harmlessly small amount of the virus in question is put into an individual, he builds antibodies against it which protect him for longer or shorter periods, depending on the nature of the virus. It is possible with some bacterial diseases to procure antibodies ready-made from an animal or another man and to give them for immediate action when an individual is sick. This is called passive immunization. For virus diseases, in only one instance is passive immunization of any great practical value. This is in measles. The blood of the average adult contains measles antibodies dating from the time he had the disease as a child, and became actively immunized himself. If these antibodies are extracted from his blood and injected in concentrated form into the child about to come down with measles, the course of the disease may be greatly ameliorated. If not given until after the disease is clinically manifest, there will ordinarily be little effect.

Next to procedures involving immunity may be placed those which eliminate the reservoirs of virus or the means by which they are disseminated. Thus, dogs are reservoirs for rabies, pigeons for ornithosis (parrot fever), and chickens possibly for some types of encephalitis. Sometimes such storehouses of viruses may be abated. The means available against dissemination are generally more applicable. A glowing example is the success which has been had with the elimination of mosquitoes which carry yellow fever. Mites and flies may be insect vectors in certain instances and may be reduced to unimportance by repellents and insecticides.

Another antiviral mechanism which has not yet been adapted to man is called interference. When one virus enters a host cell, the welcome mat may be snatched in after it and a second type of virus refused admittance. The factors involved in this process are obscure,

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but it has been demonstrated for a number of viruses and put to active use in fox distemper. This epidemic disease of foxes, which may decimate a breeder's pens, may be nipped by injection of a related or altered virus, even after the initial symptoms of distemper have appeared.

Finally comes the process of the greatest potential value of all. This is treatment by chemotherapy. Twenty years ago it was impossible to treat bacterial infections with chemicals. Now we have the sulfonamide drugs, penicillin, and streptomycin. Ten years ago it was impossible to treat typhus and other rickettsial diseases. Now they bow with suppleness to aureomycin and chloramphenicol. At present we have only minimal, laboratory responses for the viruses, with the exception of a few of the very largest which are susceptible to aureomycin and chloramphenicol. Yet there are some produceable effects, even if minimal and of no clinical importance. The scouting in the field is intense, and he who prophesies that the next ten years will bring us nothing is gloomy indeed.

This story would not be complete without a final word about plant viruses, for about twelve hundred species of plants are known to be susceptible to virus diseases. The first recorded virus disease of plants was tulip mosaic, which was recognized as a disease in 1576, though not until recently as of viral origin. While most plant viruses are harmful crop destroyers, some mottlings of leaves or flowers do not harm the plants particularly and may actually enhance their commercial value. Perhaps the most attacked plants are the tobacco, tomato, and potato. Fifty or more separate forms of viruses may attack the latter.

Although the particles of plant viruses are similar in a general way to those of animal viruses, they tend to be simpler and smaller. Many are small spherical bodies like the small animal viruses, but some, such as the tobacco mosaic virus, are almost in another category. This virus can be obtained easily in a highly concentrated form, and accordingly an intensive study of its chemical and physical characteristics has been made. As seen under the electron microscope, the virus looks to be crystalline, with the crystals having a



long pointed shape. This was suspected even before they were seen because when a solution containing them flows, the crystals line up and produce a characteristic streaming effect. It is possible that these large crystals are aggregates of several long molecules, of which only one, or a few, are necessary for infection. This suggests, then, that the essential infective unit may be molecular in size and crystalline in character. How can such an object be thought to live? It does stretch one's credulity, and yet when viewed as somewhat near the ultimate in retrograde forms of life, requiring and acquiring almost everything from its host cell for the process of duplication, then it can at least tentatively be viewed as a member of the orderly progression downward of life forms.

Like the virus diseases of animals, those of plants are not easy to control. Chemotherapeutic agents, again, are of little avail. As insects are common transmitters, some effect is possible by appropriate measures against them. Also, some viruses may be transmitted by contaminated soil or seeds, or by workmen in the fields, and control measures may be devised accordingly.

## *Epistle for My Father*

CLINTON WILLIAMS

Formality of letters cut in stone,  
the turf well-rooted, green in California sun  
from year to year, the sky's perpetual depth  
reaching beyond the sky, bird song and gull cry—  
of these your visible and quiet signature  
as to those letters that you rarely penned,  
terse, pointed, full of hidden wealth  
that once escaped my spendthrift eye.

That each seldom understood the other  
I know has been my fault as well as yours.  
A favorable conjunction of the stars  
occurs but once or twice within a lifetime.  
Orbits cross and in elliptic curve  
swing out for their enormous separate slice  
before return; and I was for my course  
too eager far to understand you wise.

Pennywise such caution would have seemed  
in any case to my green years; the dream  
was sprouting and the thumb seemed ripe for plucking.  
How could I know that aphorisms grow  
as well from love as fear? Five fingers know  
the panel only with the knuckles knocking,  
the keyless hole, the doorknob turning.  
The terror and the knowledge follow later.

## CLINTON WILLIAMS

Years later, when the door has closed twice over,  
I, too, distrust the naked and uncovered  
heart; and though you never read of Njal,  
you would approve the dryness of his burning.  
Shrewd simple man, he lay down to his rest  
amidst the flaming thatch and timbers falling;  
his wisdom had your quality of turning  
to litotes at moments overfull.

Perhaps the leaf fall speaks into your silence,  
dust dry and ordered as experience,  
reporting me approaching perihelion  
now you are fixed and only I revolve.  
The temporal circle of the dulling senses  
edges hindsight by its repetition;  
fingertips have yearly learned precision  
to read the speaking ridges of your love.

# THE FAR WEST IN NONFICTION AT MID-CENTURY

**S**TIRRED in anticipation of the quatro-centenary Coronado Celebrations of 1940-42, the federal government extended its handouts to include not only pageant makers but also scholars seriously interested in truth concerning the Spanish activities in the American Southwest. In 1944 the Rockefeller Foundation made a substantial grant to the Henry E. Huntington Library to promote studies in the economic, social, and cultural history of the Southwest. Private contributions augmented the Rockefeller grant. The Library allotted its funds wisely by awarding research fellowships and grants-in-aid to persons interested in the Southwest, broadly defined. Then last spring the Rockefeller Foundation renewed its grant and also sponsored a conference, with Occidental College as host, at which teaching and research in Southwest history were discussed. And from their perch at the Bancroft Library in Berkeley, Professors Herbert E. Bolton and George P. Hammond kept alive their long-standing interest in the Spanish era of padres and conquistadores. These stimulants have apparently quickened productive activity in this land of mountains, deserts, rich valleys, and sunshine. It is at least evident that whatever seeds may have been sown, whatever the fertilizer

used, the current crop of books dealing with the larger Southwest has been a bumper one. The yield far exceeds that in any other region within the trans-Mississippi West, and the produce—always allowing for a certain amount of chaff—is of good, marketable quality.

One of the first to work and to publish under the Huntington Library fellowship program was the University of Oklahoma's distinguished Professor E. E. Dale, author of *Cow Country* and many other good books. At the Library, Professor Dale turned his scholarly attention to a subject on which he was already well informed, the aborigines. The end product is *The Indians of the Southwest: A Century of Development Under the United States* (University of Oklahoma Press in co-operation with the Huntington Library). The book emphasizes federal relations with the Indians who became the responsibility of the United States by the Mexican Cession in 1848. Professor Dale is not one to excuse or overlook the many bungling practices of the federal government, in particular the Indian Service, but he makes clear the magnitude of a task which, a century ago, called for pacifying, feeding, civilizing, and educating red men accord-



*by Oscar Osburn Winther*

ing to the white man's mold. One recalls what an Indian chief once retorted to a missionary who had pleaded for the Christian way of life: "Me no want to be Christian; me bad enough already."

The subject of federal relations is dealt with by states, although for obvious reasons the Indians of Arizona and New Mexico are treated jointly. Not all Indian agents were corrupt. Edward F. Beale, California, was, in Dale's opinion, both able and honest. The chief trouble in California was the denial of the Indian's usufructuary right to the soil and failure to regard Indians as citizens, even though Mexico had so regarded them. The Americans in California mistreated the Indians in scandalous fashion. Vagrants were sold into bondage; young children were often kidnaped and sold for servants; disease took a heavy toll and nothing much was done by way of medical care. The decrease in the California Indian population during the first twenty years of American occupation was from 50 to 80 percent.

Professor Dale credits James S. Calhoun, a soldier and first Indian agent for New Mexico, with being the ablest of all Indian officials. Whenever possible, Calhoun used peaceful rather than forceful methods in dealing with the ever recurrent raids between Navaho and Pueblo tribes. The greatest Indian

fighter in the United States, in Dale's opinion, was veteran General George F. Crook. It was Crook who, after repeated failures by both Spaniards and Americans, finally subdued the Apaches, who had been ravaging their neighbors with monsoon regularity for centuries on end. General Crook, unlike his predecessors, pursued the Apaches to their mountain hide-outs and administered stern treatment. He brought the ever dwindling numbers of survivors to the reservations, where fair treatment was provided for all who stayed within prescribed bounds. All renegades were promptly cornered, and were accepted back on the reservations only on condition that they brought with them the heads (literally) of those who had instigated the flights. By the close of the last century all tribes may be said to have been pacified and relegated to sedentary living.

The last third of this book is devoted to such subjects as present-day education and schools, health and medical services, some current problems, and friendly relations between the federal government and the Indians as of 1947. Professor Dale concludes by saying: "The solution of the problem of the Indian of the Southwest lies in a program of education that will fit him to become a part of the white civilization which envelopes him, still retaining all that is best of his own culture." This

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book has set a pattern which might well be followed with respect to other regions where the Indian problem calls for analysis in the light of history.

The intricacies associated with Indian history are matched only by the tantalizing obscurities attending a study of Western fur trade. The professor who advised his seminar students to steer clear of the fur trade, lest they never again extricate themselves, spoke wisely. Perhaps for this reason the number of notable books published on the fur trade since 1902, at which time Hiram Martin Chittenden published his three-volume classic, *The History of the American Fur Trade*, are singularly few.

Nevertheless, one such book is Robert Glass Cleland's *This Reckless Breed of Men: The Trappers and Fur Traders of the Southwest* (Knopf). Dr. Cleland, long an institution at Occidental College and chief sponsor of the Southwest enterprises at the Huntington Library, reveals the rich maturity of his scholarship in this book. In *This Reckless Breed of Men* he has not only given order and meaning to what at best is a confusing subject, but without apparent exaggeration he has shown the rich character and human personalities of figures too often romanticized by sensation-seeking biographers.

To Dr. Cleland the Southwest boundaries are as generously conceived as are Los Angeles city limits. The author has figuratively placed one point of a divider at the Golden

Gate and has drawn a gigantic half-circle which encompasses Fort Vancouver to the north, Jackson's Hole and Taos in the Rocky Mountain area, and the Gila River to the south. No less an area would be admissible, because fur traders were no respecters of subareas of the West. In this Bunyanesque dragnet are caught nearly all the "Breed." Singled out for special treatment are Jedediah Smith, James Ohio Pattie, Ewing Young, and Joseph Reddeford Walker, but also included in the discussion are such assorted Americans as General William H. Ashley, Charles and William Bent, Captain Benjamin Bonneville, James Bridger, James Clyman; and such British Hudson's Bay men as Dr. John McLoughlin, Peter Skene Ogden, and John Work.

Dr. Cleland is sympathetic toward the American mountain men, and in recounting their movements (this is done in considerable detail) he gives his readers a genuine conception of the tortuous life on the trails, of the clash of nationalities in the Southwest, and of the significant contributions of fur traders in Western explorations. Fitting, indeed, are the concluding lines: "So life dealt kindly or harshly with the mountain men, as it deals with everyone. They were a tough, reckless, none too gentle breed. But they lived their lives, did their work, served their day and generation, and went up to possess the land." The book is composed in gracious style: the words are well chosen, the lines

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flow smoothly. Throughout there is good organization and clarity of composition. Behind what appears to be a façade of simplicity is concealed a scholarly structure solidly re-enforced.

Originally sponsored by the Coronado Commission, but a book which could doubtless have been issued anyway through the driving momentum of its author, is *Coronado on the Turquoise Trail: Knight of Pueblos and Plains*, by Herbert E. Bolton (University of New Mexico Press). Bolton, whose write-up in *Who's Who* occupies a column and lists many honors bestowed upon him by scholars and kings, has in this his eightieth year scored a new literary and scholarly success. The book won both the Whittlesey House Southwestern Fellowship Award, followed by republication of *Coronado* by Whittlesey House, and the 1950 Bancroft Prize Award of \$2,000 offered by Columbia University. The University of New Mexico edition takes its long-awaited place as Volume I in the "Coronado Historical Series" edited by Professor George P. Hammond, who is Bolton's successor as director of the Bancroft Library.

This work differs from most Bolton works in that all documentation has been omitted, although a list of sources used is included for each chapter and at the end there is a general bibliography. It is evident, however, that Professor Bolton made critical use of all newly available source materials and of earlier Coronado biographies and editors' notes

in presenting here a minutely detailed account of the great *entrada*. Especially useful have been the papers relating to the official investigation of the Cibola expedition, the witnesses at which had been members of Coronado's forces. Regarding these witnesses, Professor Bolton points out that had Coronado "hit such good fortune as fell to Cortes or Pizarro, the trial might never have been held," and consequently the present biography would have been deprived of "a priceless source of knowledge for many subjects formerly shadowy in the extreme or completely in the dark."

At least the general line of march of the Coronado expedition has long been known, but Bolton has here, through personal explorations and examination of the written sources, worked out the minute details of the routes so far as this is presently possible. Tedious as this part of the book may be to some, most readers will feel indebted to this notable scholar for the concluding chapter entitled "In Perspective." Bolton is not one to view the trek as pointless, but rather as "one of the significant expeditions of that remarkable era of the opening of the Western Hemisphere by Europeans." Coronado opened up the Wilderness Trail of the Southwest; he acquired relatively accurate geographical knowledge of a large part of the continent and helped the map makers "correct



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previous errors." Bolton corrects previously held misconceptions concerning the origin of horses used by the Plains Indians. He sees Coronado not as a swashbuckler but as a man possessing a fine sense as to the "rights and dignity of human beings."

Apparently neither aided nor abetted by agencies sponsoring Southwest studies in history but this year joining the company of historians of the greater Southwest, is Colonel Robert Selph Henry, apologist for the nation's railroads and author of *The Story of the Confederacy*. His latest product is *The Story of the Mexican War* (Bobbs-Merrill) and is designed for the general reader.

The book is well organized and clearly written. All chapters but the first contain, in chronological order, narratives of expeditions and battles in this war of a century ago. Interspersed with the general narrative of events are vivid character sketches and appraisals of the principals: Captain John C. Frémont, Colonel Stephen W. Kearny, President James K. Polk, General Antonio López de Santa Anna, General Winfield Scott, and General Zachary Taylor. In this present era of amphibious landings and withdrawals, one reads with excitement the story of "D-Day, 1847," namely, the landing at Vera Cruz—the first amphibious landing of American armed services on a foreign shore (p. 283). The landing was a conspicuous success, even though the American public seemed

not to place as much importance on this achievement of General Scott's as it did on General Taylor's almost concurrent successes at Monterrey and Buena Vista. Two full chapters plus numerous scattered references are given to the conquest of California. The first of these, "The Navy Conquers California," contains the well-known account of the activities of Commanders John D. Sloat and Robert F. Stockton, and of the Frémont escapades. The second such chapter is called "California—Revolt and Reconquest," and here are featured the General Kearny operations. If one were inclined to be picayunish, attention here could be called to several doubtful statements. Henry accords California only about one thousand foreigners at the time of the conquest (p. 107). The number was more than six times this. He excuses the fact of Frémont's 1845-46 expedition being armed to the teeth (p. 108) on grounds of necessity while traversing the "savage wilderness between the Missouri River and the Pacific." For some strange reason, immigrant parties managed to reach Oregon and California during this same period without benefit of field pieces. Colonel Henry seemingly overemphasizes the danger of aggression from foreign countries other than the United States, such as British naval operations and "the Russian advance from the North" (p. 114). What Russian advance in 1846?

The book contains no formal bibliography, but notes appear at the ends



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of chapters. These notes perhaps betray some of the book's limitations in that they reveal overwhelming reliance upon secondary accounts and upon printed United States documents. Few, if any, manuscripts are cited. And one wonders if more could not have been done with Mexican sources than to rely seemingly on one major item, Albert C. Ramsey's edited and translated work, *The Other Side* (1850).

Part of chapter i, "War Unplanned and Unsought," might best have been used at the close of the book, because it presents conclusions with respect to the war with Mexico. Some of these are extreme and unsupported by facts. One such statement is that America's "shame-faced" attitude toward this conflict "is not justified by the facts" (p. 32). Another conclusion subject to dispute is that the war was "an incapable and not inglorious step in the historical process by which the United States of America was brought to its present place in the world" (p. 37).

II

Singularly impressive is the number of new books on the Southwest's hinterland. With its spotlight focused upon Colorado, but with a diffused glow cast upon Utah, Wyoming, and New Mexico, is the twentieth volume of the "American Folkways Series." The book is Albert N. Williams' *Rocky Mountain Country* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce). The vol-

ume is more heavily weighted with good straight history than with folksy tales. Only one out of eleven chapters is devoted exclusively to the contemporary scene, and nowhere in the book does Mr. Williams indulge in sensational, episodic writing.

Chapter by chapter he slashes through the generally familiar periods of Far Western development: the Spanish period, American explorations, fur trade, Gold Rush, Civil War, silver mining, and finally reclamation. The book contains little information not previously available in any standard text. It has, however, certain advantages over textbooks: it is lively; it moves swiftly; its author has dared to be critical in his estimate of such touchy subjects of intermountain history as the labor problem in the mines and strikes by the Western Federation of Miners.

Williams looks upon his region no longer as a place to seek fortune, but as a pleasant place in which to live. The "mountain way of life" is a good, informal way of life when lived in the presence of all the examples of scenery this world has to offer.

A book given over exclusively to folkways and practically devoid of history except for casual references to past events is *Rocky Mountain Empire*, a volume of short stories edited by Elvon L. Howe (Doubleday). The twenty-nine stories here republished have been selected from

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the Sunday rotogravure *Rocky Mountain Empire Magazine* of the *Denver Post*. The best that can be said for the book is that the reading is of entertaining character; it is light as the fluffiest down, and verified facts are reduced to a minimum.

The opening yarn, "Joe Bauldauff's Bear," is an account of a bear broken to harness and used by a Colorado miner for draft purposes. A story with a little more substance is "The Tie Hacks Were Terrific," by Bill Hosokawa, a Japanese-American. This is a story on lusty lumberjacks. Contrary to Richard G. Lillard's contention (*The Great Forest*), Hosokawa considers woodsmen a dissolute lot of men. Says Hosokawa: "At a tender age the tie hacks learned to cultivate the three B's—booze, bawds, and brawls." But these men with alcohol in their veins managed somehow to hack out the ties on which today run many of this country's railroads. If the contribution to local history is not conspicuous, perhaps the book does add to the recorded folklore of the Rockies.

Overlapping much of this Rocky Mountain region are the sprawling, high-country grasslands of America. Readers of *Harper's Magazine* will recall Bernard DeVoto's blast at stockmen who would grab for themselves this great portion of the remaining government domain. To DeVoto, cattle kings and sheepmen are creatures who would, if they could, "shovel most of the West into the rivers." How true are the charges made by DeVoto? If he and his

fellow critics write falsely, then what is the true character of the modern cattlemen? Are they, as has been suggested by some, "the personification of the American ideal, the repository of all ancestral virtues"? Where does the truth lie? In *Cowboys and Cattle Kings: Life on the Range Today* (University of Oklahoma Press), C. L. Sonnichsen has given an answer based upon a 1949 Rockefeller-sponsored tour of the range. Any lover of the West would envy this free ticket to what was, and still is, the Cattle Kingdom. "I drifted through the range lands from the Rio Grande to the Yellowstone, from the Nebraska sandhills to Great Salt Lake," says Sonnichsen. What is this man's answer? He found really few of the "new model" cowmen lordly, arrogant, and rapacious. The general run of them appear to be making a rather modest living. Some praise the Taylor Grazing Act and the Grazing Service, for, as one said, "Before the passing of the Taylor Bill there was no law to prevent anyone from turning loose a thousand or a hundred thousand head of cattle or sheep on the range." Feuding, too, between cattlemen and sheepmen has waned. There now exists a strong desire to improve the breeds, whereas in former days the prevailing aim was to speed the drive to markets. But just as there used to be "cattle kings" so now there are "princes"—such persons as the Klebergs, Dan Thornton, Fred C. DeBerard, Bob Lazear, and Alfred Collins. These men, in a group by

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themselves, operate not only on a big scale, but also in accordance with scientific business practices.

The day of the long drives is gone, but so long as grass grows on the Western ranges (good for nothing else) there will be cattlemen. Now as in the past they have their own folk patterns; they dress distinctively; they have their own code; they raise their "younguns" with as much zest as they do their cattle, and they perpetuate such operational practices as still serve useful purposes.

The most serious and most significant chapter in this book is one entitled "The Rancher and the Government." In it the author comes to grips with the basic problem aired by DeVoto. In answer to charges that the ranchers have engaged in selfish, wanton exploitation of the range and that they seek to grab for themselves land that belongs to all the people of the United States, Sonnichsen, while admitting grounds for voicing public resentment, calls attention to the record which reveals no government grants to ranchers that are comparable to those made to the homesteaders. "No adequate provision was ever made for parceling out chunks of land big enough to set a rancher up in business on the arid plains." So what happened? The rancher used, and abused, the open range. Then came the Taylor Act of 1934 designed to correct evils. It is, however, Sonnichsen's opinion (contrary to DeVoto's) that cattlemen can do, and have done, much to re-

strain themselves. He contends that the general run of ranchers—cattlemen and sheepmen—are no less responsible citizens than are coal miners, bankers, and potato farmers. Quite clearly many new doctoral dissertations are in prospect and the final answer as to how the range should be governed is not now definite.

Also concerned with the present and future problems of the high country is a serious and well-written book by Morris E. Garnsey, *America's New Frontier: The Mountain West* (Knopf). Garnsey, a professor of economics at the University of Colorado, has a thesis to present which, put in his own words, is this: "... the Mountain West has reached a crucial stage in its development. The American people are now making decisions which will determine whether the Mountain West is to become a backwoods or a frontier in American life." This being the case, it is Professor Garnsey's belief that public opinion should be "mobilized on a regional basis" in order to facilitate the formulation of sound national policy, provided we have sound analyses of the given regions.

Having thus asked for analysis, Professor Garnsey proceeds to present one for his selected region, the "Mountain West," comprising Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. He first reveals the place of



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the contemporary Mountain West in general American economy. The population growth of this area compared with the Pacific states has been slow; reconversion has trailed the rest of the country; water power presents a crisis. The region, he implies, may become either an American backwoods or an American frontier. If properly exploited, this region, with its mineral, forest, and recreational resources, could, he says, be made to maintain twice its present population and could be a vital cog in the national economy. At present, though, the Mountain West maintains a balance of exports and imports only through federal funds made available to the region. This investment of federal funds he holds is justifiable, since such expenditures are clearly in the national interests. Removal of institutional barriers, such as discriminatory freight rates, would be a boon to the mountain region. Finally, Professor Garnsey presents a twelve-point declaration of what he calls "liberal economic policy for the West," designed to augment the economic and social well-being of this area. The book is provocative; it deserves careful reading and reflection as an approach to an intelligent understanding of what regionalism means in the American economic structure.

Not nearly so broadly regional as its indefinite title might convey is *Voice of the West: Biography of a Pioneer Newspaper*, by Wendell J. Ashton (Duell, Sloan and Pearce). One is obliged to read as far as para-

graph three in the Preface before the secret is revealed, to wit: "It is the story of *Deseret News*." It would be scarcely necessary in this case to camouflage the real subject of this book. For a full century now the *Deseret News* has been a name to contend with and its history would always have attraction for many readers. This Salt Lake City newspaper has scarcely had a dull moment in its century of existence, and it has been identified not only with many effective personalities in Western journalism but also with many issues unique in the annals of the West.

The present book is not a profound study of Mormon journalism at work; nevertheless it does, in chronological order, summarize and present editorial excerpts indicating the position taken by the *Deseret News* on such dramatic events as "The Mormon War," the Civil War, the Pacific Railroad, the battle over Church and State, the Edmunds Act, and, more recently, the Great Depression and World War II. On page 49 there appears a good and not elsewhere readily available map of the old "State of Deseret." The book contains many well-selected illustrations, including the roster of *Deseret News* editors; also a facsimile reproduction of Volume I, Number 1, page 1 of this newspaper bearing the headline: "Terrible Fire in San Francisco."

Listed in the Index of *Voice of the West* are "Mountain lion" and "Mountain Warbler," but not "Mountain Meadows Massacre." The reason why Mr. Ashton could



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not very well discuss the position taken by his newspaper on this major news event of 1857 is that the *Deseret News* dodged the issue and made few significant references to it. Failure of Mr. Ashton to take notice of this is a shortcoming of his book.

By no means lacking in courage to deal frankly with this, the most tragic, hushed-up, and confused subject in Utah history, is Mrs. Juanita Brooks, author of *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Stanford University Press). Mrs. Brooks considers herself a loyal and active member of the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints, and she is admittedly a granddaughter of one who "was there." "There" refers to that lonely and little frequented spot in southwest Utah known as Mountain Meadows, where on September 7, 1857, about one hundred twenty Missouri and Arkansas immigrants, known as the Fancher Party, were slaughtered by white men and Indians.

Mrs. Brooks has had access to Church archives, and she has ferreted out many diaries, journals, and letters never before used by writers on this subject. These manuscripts, or photostats thereof, include the personal papers of Jacob Smith Boreman, judge at the John D. Lee trial, those of John D. and Mrs. Lee, Major J. H. Carleton, Isaac C. Haight, Benjamin Platte (an employee of Lee's), Wilford Woodruff, and many others. The author's approach to the subject of the massacre is scholarly, direct, and fearless. And why does she al-

low the chips to fall where they may? Her answer is: "I feel sure that nothing but the truth can be good enough for a Church to which I belong." Mrs. Brooks holds little brief for fellow-Mormon contemporary historians, among them Professor Leland H. Creer at the University of Utah, who, she holds, have been slow to admit what they know.

In this book Mrs. Brooks first gives a succinct sketch of Mormon activities during the decade prior to the massacre. She also calls attention to tensions brought on by persecutions and threat of a "Mormon War" (1857), all psychological factors that might explain what happened at Mountain Meadows. Even though surprisingly little is known of the Fancher Party, Mrs. Brooks writes of the hatreds exhibited by members of this group toward the Saints and retaliations on the part of South Utahans preliminary to the slaughter. Epithets were not spared on either side. Next she weighs the reliability of evidence as it pertains to the role played by the principals of the Church—Brigham Young, George A. Smith, Philip Klingon-smith, John M. Higbee, Isaac C. Haight, William H. Dame, and John D. Lee. All share in the responsibility for what happened, according to Mrs. Brooks. Young she blames for inciting violence through his sermons and for being an accessory after the fact. Young knew what had

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taken place and he also was fully aware as to how and why it happened. Lee, the only one who paid the supreme penalty, was, if comparisons are possible, less guilty than the others mentioned, with the possible exception of Young. But Lee admitted participation; and by sacrificing him it was thought by the leaders that others might escape similar punishment—and they did. Notes, appendixes, and an annotated bibliography enhance the value of this book; they throw additional light on many controversial points.

### III

Ubiquitous California has played a role, at times a major one, in books dealing with the Southwest. And those books bearing in their title the magic word "California" show evidence of generous reciprocation. An example of this is Harlan D. Fowler's *Camels to California* (Stanford University Press), the seventh volume in the "Stanford Transportation Series." Quite apart from the regional scope of this book is the newness of much of the material presented. Especially does this apply to the first four chapters, which tell of two expeditions to the Levant in the United States Navy storeship *Supply* to search for camels for the Army. Operation Dromedary, one might add, was a conspicuous success. The remaining two-thirds of the book are devoted to Edward F. Beales's 1857 expedition from San Antonio to Fort Tejon and Los Angeles in which the

camels were used successfully as beasts of burden; also to subsequent attempts (mostly failures) to use the camels in connection with both military and civilian enterprises.

It is Mr. Fowler's opinion that this scheme, which originated with Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, failed because the Civil War prevented Davis and other interested parties from organizing camel transportation on a more permanent basis calling for expansion. Perhaps the experiment was cut short by war, but the fact remains, as Mr. Fowler is aware, that the advance of the iron horse would soon have displaced the best of camel trains. *Camels to California* is clearly and compactly written. Personalities such as "Greek George" and "Hi Jolly" (Hadji Ali) stand out in bold relief; so, too, do the weird animals from North Africa and Arabia that traversed the arid Southwest. During the Civil War, the animals passed into private hands, and some of these humped beasts subsequently appeared in Nevada's Washoe region in connection with freighting operations there.

It is this same area that provides the stage for *Rocket of the Comstock*, by Ethel Manter (Caxton). This is a biography of John William Mackay, a much oversimplified one. References to and discussion of the economics of Mackay's colossal mining enterprises are sketchy. In order to understand the Comstock of the 'sixties and 'seventies, the reader needs to know more about technological changes at the mines and about the

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complicated financial situation involving San Francisco's Bank of California and the international money market. The book lacks the punch of George Lyman's *The Comstock Ring*; and as a characterization of Mackay it falls short of Oscar Lewis' achievement in *The Silver Kings*. Moreover, the Mackay biography lacks the ring of authenticity inasmuch as Miss Manter has occasionally fictionized her story in order to achieve dramatic effects. It is extremely doubtful that she can prove that on specified occasions "John Mackay's eyes narrowed" (p. 14), "Mackay smiled" (p. 15), "Young Mackay shifted his blankets to the opposite shoulder" (p. 15), "to himself he simpered" (p. 48), etc. Also, the reader is left in doubt as to the sources of many of the direct quotations from Mackay.

For all its shortcomings, however, the book does possess easy readability, and one is given here a close-up character sketch, the first full-length biography of this kingpin of the Comstock Lode. There is no bibliography, but seventy-five footnotes reveal some of the sources consulted. The book is generously illustrated.

Exciting as is Nevada history, it is but a sideshow to that of the Golden State. And the seriousness with which Californians take their history is indicated by their recent threefold centennial celebration: the discovery of gold by John W. Marshall, the adoption of the state's first constitution, and admission into the Union. Publishers the country

over have capitalized on these observances by issuing a wide assortment of books pertaining in some way to California. One such volume is Carey McWilliams' *California: The Great Exception* (Current Books, Inc.: A. A. Wyn).

Not the least of California's great exceptions is the author of this book. No one loves California more than does Carey McWilliams, but he shows it much as does the loving mother who spans her child to the words, "This hurts me more than it does you." In the present volume, however, he lays aside the switch (still within reach, though) and proceeds to show how California does most things differently—and in a "bang-up" way.

Characteristically Californian was the way the centennial celebrations were launched. Writes McWilliams: "On the morning of January 24, 1948, thousands of automobiles began to converge on the sleepy town of Coloma. . . . The confusion, incongruity, and disorder of the Coloma celebration, inaugurating the centennial of the discovery of gold, are symbolic of the still on-rushing, swiftly-paced tempo of events in California." To this he adds: "Just as California cannot properly celebrate its centennial so . . . one cannot, as yet, properly place California in the American scheme of things."

Those inclined to romanticize about events a hundred years old will



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benefit by reading *California: The Great Exception*. McWilliams adjusts one's sense of relative understanding of facts and events. Important as was the "Poor Man's Gold Rush" which gave California a lead over the Pacific Northwest, but which probably did "more harm than good," one should not, McWilliams points out, be blinded to such developments as the towering significance of the arrival of three million new Golden Staters during the past decade, the construction of the Central Valley Project, the muddled character of California politics, and the state's fabulous booms—and, one might add, busts. Some of the things included in the larger list of peculiarities are not as much confined to California's preserves as the author would have us believe.

McWilliams is impressed with the versatility and novelty with which California survives one crisis after another. He looks ahead, too: "California's destiny, which can be perceived but dimly today, will correct the balance by investing California, willy-nilly, with the role of western leadership." And so, as is written on the State Capitol: "Bring Me Men to Match My Mountains!"

### IV

The present generation of historians appears to by-pass railroad history. The currently large number of railroad books are for the most part authored by hack journalists and railroad hobbyists. The exceptions

are an engineer (now dead) and a professor of English. *The First Transcontinental Railroad: Central Pacific, Union Pacific* (Simmons-Boardman) is the posthumous work of John Debo Galloway, a civil engineer. Long known to his fellow San Franciscans, Galloway made railroad history a special study, and the present volume is the product of this enthusiastic interest in rails.

The book is doubly welcome. A one-volume work on Central-Union Pacific has been long awaited; and, for all its shortcomings, *The First Transcontinental Railroad* is a simple, straightforward, narrative account. It avoids involvements in the general political and economic history, and controversial subjects are handled without heaping violent abuse on the principals, even though some are deserving of rough treatment.

The book opens with a brief sketch of early railroad development in America, including proposals and surveys for a railroad to the Pacific. The author found none earlier than 1832, that of Judge S. W. Dexter of Ann Arbor, Michigan, who made definite proposals for a Pacific railroad. At this point antiquarians would name Robert Mills of Charleston, South Carolina, who in 1820 published *Treatise on Inland Navigation* wherein he proposed a railroad that would connect the headwaters of the Missouri with those of the Columbia.

The materials on the major lines are divided evenly between the two



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companies. Galloway has not dodged discussion of Theodore D. Judah's significant role in laying the groundwork for the successful construction of the Central Pacific Railroad, even though the "Big Four" chose not to honor this great engineer. Stanford, Crocker, Huntington, and Hopkins are coldly characterized in *Who's Who* fashion, and the same may be said of such Union Pacific notables as Oakes and Oliver Ames, Peter A. Dey, Thomas C. Durant, L. M. Dodge, and others. The Crocker Construction Company is not mentioned, and only casual references are made to the Crédit Mobilier. What interests the author of this book most are the great engineering feats. To have a book written with this emphasis is not only highly justifiable; it is most welcome. Maps and illustrations are unusually good.

Main lines have no monopoly on railroad historians. *Oil Lamps and Iron Ponies: A Chronicle of the Narrow Gauges*, by Frederic Shaw, Clement Fisher, Jr., and George H. Harlan (Bay Books), and *Railroads Down the Valleys: Some Short Lines of the Oregon Country*, by professor of English, Randall V. Mills (Pacific Books), are good examples of books that will interest train enthusiasts. The first is concentrated on four hundred miles of Pacific Coast narrow gauges and the latter is restricted to the Pacific Northwest. What the authors of *Oil Lamps* mainly seek to achieve is to give distinction to each of their eight pet lines. In addition, one derives certain general conclu-

sions, namely, that narrow gauges flourished between 1865 and 1900; that they depended upon main lines and coastal shipping for their livelihood; and finally that, with the advent of motor trucks, the proud little engines and the rails over which they chugged were relegated to scrap heaps.

Even though Professor Mills has not excluded narrow gauges from his case histories, *Railroads Down the Valleys* contains no duplication of the material in *Oil Lamps*. Professor Mills has singled out for treatment five short lines, or minor combinations thereof, lines which had their inception during the rail-boom era of the late last century and which subsequently either passed out of existence or were absorbed by trunk-line systems.

The author, who had previously established an interesting pattern for dealing with Northwest transportation materials in his *Stern-Wheelers Up Columbia*, tells good stories. He enlivens dry accounts with bits of folklore, as indicated in his account of "Old Narrow Gauge" (Dr. Dorsey S.) Baker, so called for his stinginess. He tells of a foot traveler who overtook Dr. Baker's train and was offered a ride. The reply was, "No thank you, Doctor, I'm in a hurry." Steamers, too, had their slow side, and Professor Mills indicates that only the difference between cargoes placed fore and aft determined

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whether it was "fast" or "slow" freight. Anyone who even approaches Professor Mills's enthusiasm for locomotives and bygone trains should read this book. If he be an Oregonian, he will be overcome with nostalgia for excursions to Newport on the old Oregon Pacific; if an outsider, he will enjoy a feeling of comradeship shared by all lovers of railroads, old and new.

### V

Along the very route of Dr. Baker's rawhide railway, the Lewis and Clark Expedition had in 1806 slogged its way back toward St. Louis. In *Two Captains West*, by Albert and Jane Salisbury (Superior Publishing Company), the entire round trip of the Lewis and Clark Expedition is clearly mapped; and present-day road builders and travelers following the course (vicariously or otherwise) of the two famous captains would find in this book a ready and entertaining reference. There are eight sectional maps indicating the route followed by the exploring party, and dates of stops en route are indicated. The book is profusely illustrated, and captions for many of the pictures include fitting excerpts from the journals of Lewis and Clark.

In essence, this book is a travelogue by the Salisburys into which interesting Lewis and Clark materials are incorporated. Lewis and Clark fans, together with lovers of wide-open spaces who are sensitive to

history, should find it pleasant reading.

Also placed on an expansive stage is Stewart H. Holbrook's latest—*The Yankee Exodus* (Macmillan). The book deals with New Englanders wherever found—except in Dixie. Even though Mr. Holbrook thinks of his book as "a pioneer work," one recalls Lois Kimball Mathews' *The Expansion of New England*, published four decades ago. As one would expect, *Yankee Exodus* is a much-expanded version, and it takes note of Yankee migration in the trans-Mississippi area, a territory neglected by Mathews. Moreover the present work is a more popularized version of New England migrations than is found in the 1909 Mathews version.

With respect to settlement east of the Mississippi, Holbrook has chosen to ignore what Mathews did not—Indiana and Illinois; neither of these states is even mentioned in the Index. Even though Mathews tended to overemphasize the relative importance of New Englanders in Indiana and Illinois, many districts there came to bear distinct New England earmarks.

The trans-Mississippi West receives the major attention in the latter half of the book. The role of Yankees in the California Gold Rush is the subject of one entire chapter; the Oregon country receives two—the second of which, "Cargoes of Maidens," contains the oft-told and overpublicized story of Asa Mercer's attempt at inducing less than one

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hundred New England women colonists to migrate to the Puget Sound area.

Mr. Holbrook has made considerable effort to make his book readable, but at the same time he has overburdened his pages with hundreds of names of outgoing New Englanders. Carefully worked-out statistical data have been avoided and the reader is left without a clear picture as to the relative strength and numerical importance of New Englanders in the respective regions of the United States. One recognizes, for example, that Yankees were important in the early Oregon country, but one must not overlook the fact that in 1850 New Englanders were outnumbered twelve to one by people from New York, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee. And prominent as were the Yankees in the pioneer commercial enterprises in the

Pacific Northwest, the "Democrats" (not Yankees) managed the political life of the region.

Taken as a whole, this mid-century array of Western nonfiction offers sufficient evidence of sustained scholarly and literary interest in the history of an area that one hundred years ago was an untamed frontier. The books reveal a striking emphasis upon the greater Southwest, and the handiwork of outstanding scholars in American history is conspicuously represented. The books of the year are, in the main, serious but very readable; and with a couple of exceptions the emphasis is upon regions—their history, their economy, their residual and indomitable Western spirit.

*The Arctic Plain*

GENE DAVIS

Land of wide icy wastes and still white seas,  
Of sweeping plains and myriad frost-jewell'd lakes,  
Where sea and land and sky merge in white mist,  
And light and life itself are lost in space;  
No sound or movement stirs the still, cold air,  
The earth and all its creatures breathless lie,  
The spectral owl stands statuelike and still,  
Time hangs suspended in the Milky Way.

# MAN AS INTERPRETER\*

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*by Lewis Mumford*

THE WORLD, according to a view that dates back to Democritus, is a random mixture of atoms: chance created solid aggregations out of endless atomic collisions, and man's nature was formed, essentially, by extraneous forces, likewise operating by necessity or chance. This view contrasts with the religious intuition that man is the object of a divine purpose: a rational soul with an eternity in which to realize and perfect his own development—whether that ends in nonbeing, as with Buddhism, or in everlasting beatitude, as in the Christian doctrine. The latter views perhaps overmagnify man's self-sufficiency and make him a terminal point in a too limited process; but the first view not merely demolishes the significance of human history but shuts its eyes to the evidence of order and purpose that even physical nature presents. Let us aim at a fuller and juster statement.

Before every attempt to describe the world and life and time there stands an unspoken prologue: human history itself. Without that prologue, the rest of the play would be an unintelligible buzz and blur. Neither history nor nature is given directly in contemporary experience, except in snatches that would be meaningless if they were not part of a long sequence of interpretations to which man has given his days and years. Each generation, each individual, can make but a minute sampling of the whole in its effort to reduce to intelligible order the collective experience upon which both knowledge and practice rest. What we know of the world comes to us mainly by interpretation, not by direct experience; and the very vehicle of interpretation itself is a product of that which must be explained: it implies man's organs and physiological aptitudes, his feelings and curiosities and sensibilities, his organized social relations and his means for transmitting and perfecting that unique

\* This essay forms part of *The Conduct of Life*, to be published by Harcourt, Brace and Company.



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agent of interpretation, language. History itself would remain undecipherable without the meanings and values that have emerged from it.

Man's basic data are not in the least simple or elemental: what is basic is the highly complex structure of meanings and values produced and transmitted in history. What man knows about the nature of the physical universe is only a subordinate part of his own process of self-discovery and self-revelation. In recent times, baffled by his own inner state, tormented by insoluble problems, Western man was in fact driven to postulate, almost as much for his peace of mind as for any more practical purpose, a highly simplified order, from which most of his own essential characteristics were excluded: a world free from desire and feeling and dream, a world divorced from human purposes and human hopes: a world in which the mind was laid to sleep in order to operate more efficiently on the body. But the fact is that complexity, contradiction, paradox, and mystery are original features of human experience; whereas simplicity and clarity and order are extremely sophisticated end-products. The classic scientific attempts to picture the world, from Thales onward, confuse conceptual simplicity with the primitive and basic.

When we take into account the unspoken prologue of human history we must demolish this misleading elementalism. Not sense-data or atoms or electrons or packets of energy, but purposes, interests, and meanings, constitute the underlying facts of human experience. These values rise out of impenetrable historic depths, like a coral reef, by the heaping up of layer upon layer of life, with each visible event emerging out of a million events that have left their historic deposit, and out of countless millions of lives that have never quite passed away. Whatever man knows about external nature is a by-product of man's culture, as revealed in history; and the dimensions of nature alter with every change in man's own development: our present views of the universe are no more ultimate than the cave man's. On every page of nature's opened book, man scrawls in the margin his own autobiography.

To understand the nature of man, accordingly, we must first of all understand this prologue; that is, we must take man as we now

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find him, in all his historic complexity: no bare animal shivering in his skin, groping in the dark, clawing for food, an alien in a hostile land, surrounded by enemies. Quite the contrary: we find man a creature born into a going society, which provides him with clothes, protects him from dangers, shelters him against the elements, offers him food, supplies him with speech, surrounds him with some degree of love, endows him with a score of gifts before he has even left the cradle. Starting out in such a world, we discover that friendliness and unfriendliness, good and bad, are more primordial elements of human experience than matter or motion. Tenderness appeared in man's mammalian ancestors aeons before he learned to preserve fire or shape a stone.

Human life, in its historic manifoldness and purposefulness, is our starting point. No single being can embrace that life; no single lifetime contains it; no single culture can encompass all its potentialities. One cannot even partly understand the nature of man unless one realizes that its roots lie buried in the debris of countless invisible lives and that its topmost branches must by their very frailty defy the most daring climber. Man lives in history; he lives through history; and, in a certain sense, he lives for history, since no small part of his activities goes toward preparation for an undisclosed future. Without animal faith in the past that he helped to make and in the future he is still making, human life would shrink in all its dimensions.

In his own person, man represents every aspect of the cosmos. Reduced to his lowest terms, he is a lump of carbon and a puddle of water, mixed with a handful of equally common metals, minerals, and gases. But man is likewise a unit of organic life; he is a member of the animal world, and of a special order of the animal world, the vertebrates, with capacity for free movements, for selective intercourse with the environment, for specially canalized responses through a highly developed nervous system. Still further, man belongs to the family of warm-blooded animals, the mammals, whose females give milk to their young and so form a close and tender domestic partnership, often fiercely protective, for the nurture of their offspring; and through his own internal development, his whole

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life is suffused with emotions and erotic responses which have persisted, like so many traits of domestication—the cow's milk or the hen's eggs—in exaggerated form. Starting as an animal among the animals, man has stretched and intensified certain special organic capacities in order to develop more fully what is specifically human. In a fashion that has no rivals in other species, he thinks, he plays, he builds, he loves, he dreams.

Those who try to understand the nature of man mainly by emphasizing his continuities with other animal species, naturally neglect the organs and agents that set him off from those species: hence they underestimate his creativeness and originality. Their attitude is, no doubt, partly a reaction against the ancient misuse of the symbolic functions: the attempt to make words directly perform operations. In general, modern man overvalues the act and undervalues the word; did not Goethe himself, word magician though he was, say: "In the beginning was the Deed"?

Now language, as the vehicle of social solidarity, emotion, feeling, and thought, often produces potent results on other human beings: not merely gross changes in behavior like those brought about via words in hypnosis and suggestion, but a large range of minor modifications, every day and hour of our lives. To overlook this fact in the spiritual economy of the organism is like overlooking breathing in its physiology. It is the very success of symbolic functions in transforming the attitudes and the behavior of other human beings that has tempted man to misuse this magic: he has foolishly thought that it is possible to apply verbal formulas to alter the behavior of physical bodies. If the experiments of Dr. Rhine and his colleagues in psychokinesis prove correct, even this propensity may not rest on a complete hallucination; but it is obviously much easier to make one set of spots face upward in dice by placing them in that position than by using an extrasensory factor to bring about this result, so man probably wasted on word magic much valuable effort that might, long ago, have gone into the invention of a more appropriate methodology. Even the great Roman physician Galen supplemented his natural knowledge with spells and magic formulas.



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But man's capacity for misusing verbalization is no reason for devaluing the function itself. The various contemporary reactions against the full employment of language, from Dadaism to logical positivism, will not in the least save us from error and self-deception; they merely substitute for the small detectable errors of misused speech the colossal error of rejecting the greater part of man's subjectivity, because it comes to us primarily in symbols of a non-operational order—symbols that have as many meanings as there are contexts and internal states. Modern man's insulation against the poetic use of words, treating all persuasion as "mere propaganda"—irrespective of whether the attempt to persuade is based on truth or falsehood—can lead only to a general denial of the possibilities of growth or transformation in the self, except by a purely physiological process. But since medicine teaches us that there are no purely physiological processes, no part of the body that is not in some degree affected by mental states, including images and symbols, this self-imposed immunization and impoverishment is also a self-deception. On this matter, the present argument sharply disagrees with all forms of behaviorism; it also differs radically from the analysis put forward by the late Dr. Trigant Burrow, to whose works I cordially refer the reader. Where Dr. Burrow sees in the use of language only division and distortion, I read mainly socialization and self-development.

If all the mechanical inventions of the last five thousand years were suddenly wiped away, there would be a catastrophic loss of life; but man would still remain human. But if one took away the function of interpretation, by destroying the capacity to use language, an earlier human invention, the whole round earth would fade away more swiftly than Prospero's vision: insubstantial and dreamlike, without the words that arrest it and order it into widening patches of significance and value. Worse than this, man would sink into a more helpless and brutish state than any animal—close to paralysis. In the case of brain injury through accident, or in senile decay, one gets final proof of the key place occupied by man's symbol-using functions. Where there is a breakdown of tissue in the brain, sufficient to wipe out large areas of memory, an aged person



will sometimes say, "My sight is poor; I am getting blind." Actually, medical examination may prove that the eyesight remains excellent; so what the afflicted person means is, "I am losing the capacity to understand what I see: it no longer makes sense to me." Once a person ceases to function symbolically, a water tap would be merely a visible tube of brass, but would not indicate water, and the near-by glass on the shelf would not, however close the physical association, suggest a method of bringing water to the lips; and pictures or verbal texts that represented these objects would be even less effective in prompting the right actions in response to thirst. The researches of Dr. Kurt Goldstein leave no doubt on this score.

Almost all meaning above the animal level of response comes through abstraction and symbolic reference: in fact, the symbolic medium is the very one in which man, as man, lives and moves and has his being. The invention of the symbol was not merely the first great step from the organic to the superorganic: it also led to the further development from the social to the personal. Without constant reference to essences, as represented by symbols, existence would become empty, meaningless, and absurd—which is, precisely, what it seems to the mere existentialist. But what the existentialist, in horror and despair, finds lacking in the world is merely what is lacking in his philosophy. Once one throws over symbols and essences as Captain Ahab threw over compass and sextant in his effort to come to grips with Moby Dick, an empty malice of unfocused energy, taken into the soul as a paranoid impulse to destruction, is all that will be left. When one begins by defacing the word one ends by defaming life. That is part of the plight of modern man.

The symbol-making activities of man, speech and dream, have turned out, then, to be more than tools, and they have until now played a far larger part in human life than his technical mastery of the natural environment through weapons and tools. Dreaming is the dynamic, forward-striving, goal-seeking complement to remembering. While man's organic and social memory, through monuments and books and buildings, opens up for him the large resources of his past, the dream pushes his life forward to a more

varied future, not given in either nature or his own history; the next moment, the next lifetime, the next century first comes to him in images of foreboding and hope: he sees a future preformed by the self, obedient to man's emergent nature, capable of projecting into public forms the hidden soul. Through the dream, man offsets his sense of guilt and anxiety, caused by his willful departure from his animal destiny, by his effort to set himself up in rivalry with nature and to put forth an independent creation, more responsive to his nature and desires than the actual world. So it is not an accident, but the very essence of human life, that some of its best and its worst moments are lived exclusively in the mind: anxiety and anguish, joy and fulfillment, are never so pure as they are when represented in art: "emotion recollected in tranquillity."

But note: through the mechanism of the dream, both directly and as elaborated in the arts, man surpasses his simple biological self both ways: upward and downward, bettering and worsening his natural self, embellishing and yet often defiling his environment. Long ago he departed from his ancestral home, in order to spend most of his years in two resorts of his own devising: heaven and hell. Man's very deviltry is a product of the same imagination which first represented his own utmost potentialities in the image of an all-wise and infinitely loving God. On this interpretation, literature, art, religion, those artful by-products of man's subjective life, are no less integral a part of man's existence than the natural environment and the ingenious instruments he has devised for mastering it.

In other words, the dream is no mere mechanism of escape, but the foundation of man's own specific mode of life: the life that emerges in the person out of his stolid animal limitations and his compulsive social controls. However much he admires, with Walt Whitman, the contentment and aplomb of animals, man's own life-course is a more defiant and daring one, defiant to the point of madness, but enlivened, in its contradictions, its disparities, its absurdities, by a sense of comedy, which recognizes, with a wry grimace, how far his godlike pretensions have fallen short: how impulse has hardened into habit, how gesture has frozen into tics and compul-

sions, how every leap upward has ended, at last, in a clownish fall. But out of man's very maladjustment, promoted by his concentration on his inner world, he has achieved a deeper consciousness of existence, and eventually an ampler sanity and balance than dumb animal existence could achieve. When mankind gave its days over to babbling and dreaming, life took a new path, at right angles to the horizontal plane of organic survival. For no Promethean fire has ever burned so steadily or so brightly as the flame man first lighted within himself.

What holds of the dream holds in almost equal degree of the word. Every part of the "real" world, from the wooded mountaintop to the towered city, has become material for man's symbolic activities, and gains in visibility, and usability, through man's capacity to interpret it and refashion it in his mind. Even the photographic image of the remotest star bears the imprint of man's subjectivity: this pin point of white on a dark ground becomes more than that only through the operation of a complex structure of interpretation that man has built up since the time of the Chaldean stargazers. As soon as any part of the external environment, natural or man-made, ceases to further man's purposes, it ceases to have meaning, and even when it remains in sight it falls out of mind—witness what happened to the Roman baths once the Christian fathers condemned the ritual of bodily care that they subserved. Once a structure ceases to have meaning, men will quarry it for stone, as readily as they would quarry into an open hillside: witness again the assault on Gothic buildings in eighteenth-century France. So, too, a change in the direction of human interest, an interior subjective change, could wreck New York as destructively as an atomic bomb. On the other hand, even a "worthless" natural object—a martyr's reputed lock of hair or the fragment of Java man's skull—may acquire value through the projection of meaning upon it; in this case, it will be guarded tenderly from generation to generation, as if it were a precious work of art.

At every moment, thanks to our symbols, we are nourished by other lives that have flourished and faded, leaving behind only an



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apparently wraithlike deposit of words and images, on paper, stone, or celluloid: a story memorized, an observation recorded, a line skillfully drawn, a perception of abstract relationships condensed in special signs. What man is and does passes away; what continues in existence is the ever enlarging structure of interpretation derived from history, and stored, sifted, transmitted, from generation to generation. That is the capital fund that makes human productivity and creativity, indeed the capacity to become human, possible. Since man not only lives his life but represents it to himself, since he not merely accepts the order of nature but refashions it in his mind, the very subjective elements that destroy his animal harmony contribute to his creativity. Man is happiest when he feels that all his frustrations and struggles, though often painful, may have significance; he is unhappy, on the contrary, when he believes that even his most pleasurable fulfillments may be meaningless. Whatever else man's social heritage has done for him, its chief function has been to lay a stable foundation of values, meanings, and purposes beneath his other life-sustaining activities.

Against the long-prevalent view that man is but an insignificant speck in a sterile, depersonalized universe, the present philosophy holds that it is the physical universe that is insignificant until man emerges from it and takes possession of it and interprets it in terms of his own past and future. Apart from man's purposes and values, a grain of dirt is as important as a planetary system: without man, both are in fact nonentities.

Man, in other words, is the agent through which natural events become intelligible and natural forces valuable, since events and forces may be increasingly directed, in accordance with man's own plan of life, to their human, and eventually their divine, destination. This fact makes man an active mediator but not a God. Apart from mind and spirit, word and dream, man's powers are in fact smaller than the forces acting upon him; and he is accordingly at their mercy: a change of a few degrees upward or downward in the body's temperature will bring about human death. This philosophy conceives the role played by man as interpreter as the apex of natural existence; as such he is the quintessence of all that has gone before



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and the embryonic vehicle of development and fulfillments that lie far ahead.

Man, in his full historic dimensions, takes into himself times past and times to come, places near and places distant, the seen and the unseen, the actual and the possible. What was once called the objective world is a sort of Rorschach ink blot, into which each culture, each type of personality, reads a meaning only remotely derived from the shape and color of the blot itself. Like Brahma, man himself is the slayer and the slain, the knower and the known, the creator and the creature of a world which, though it encloses him, he also transcends. Though he did not fabricate the world, he has colored it by his consciousness and reconstituted it by his intelligence. If man has surpassed his animal destiny, it is because he has utilized the image and the word to explore territory that no one can reach on foot or open up with axe or plow. He has learned to ask questions for which, in the limits of a single lifetime or a single epoch of culture, he will never find the answer. Each civilization treats that territory, boundless and impenetrable, as in some significant way the coeval of its familiar homeland: it represents the sum of things worth living for and worth dying for, the values and purposes that not merely evoke a higher life, but even justify death itself, through whose foreknowledge, applied to the affairs of the moment, man further overrides his animal limitations. As zero and infinity give him a sense of possibilities he cannot reckon with the aid of his ten digits, so his heavens and hells bring to light otherwise hidden potentialities of his earthly existence; and the ideal accordingly is the fourth dimension of every structure he builds.

Here is the valid realm of religion: the sphere beyond knowledge and certainty, where ultimate mystery itself adds a new dimension to meaning. Out of the silence of infinite space comes a sound: the birth cry of human consciousness. Against the enveloping darkness man throws the searchlight of his intelligence. As man projects further the cone of light, through his feats of interpretation, he likewise widens the perimeter of the surrounding darkness. The ultimate gift of conscious life is a sense of the mystery that encompasses it.

# GIVE US THIS DAY

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by Helen F. McDonald

**G**REAT-GRANDMOTHER Running Antelope waited on the low chair in the kitchen corner by the northeast window. For about twenty years now the Blackfeet Indians had considered this spot as Sister Philippa's first-aid station. Motionless, wrapped in her gray-white blanket and shabby bandana, she waited.

She waited, dimly seeing, forty feet beyond, the back of Sister Philippa's large black-veiled form against the sink at the south wall. Rising above the sound of hot water flushing full speed into the galvanized pail under the faucet, the Indian overheard the nun's strained voice meant for God alone: "You *know* our need. You *can*, You *will* make him manage the Mission right! Merciful Father, give us the peace and plenty we need to go on helping the Indians!"

So saying, she turned off the hot water and turned on the cold, to temper the green-soap solution in the pail. She reached into the built-in cupboard over the sink for first-aid supplies and returned to Running Antelope laden with the pail of warm water and green soap, newspapers, scissors, ointment, bandage, and towel. She noticed the mask-of-death appearance in the old squaw's withered face. Not even an eyelash flicked from the livid, heavy eyelids.

The veteran Sister Superior of the Blackfeet Mission School spread the newspapers on the floor, set the pail of warm water down, and knelt, scissors in hand, lopping off chunks of filthy rags that bound the ulcerated foot. The fetid odor gagged her. She wanted to hold her breath but she talked to cheer the squaw.

"Your foot hurts how many days?"

Running Antelope feebly drew her skeletonlike right arm from the folds of the gray-white blanket, spread wide apart her long fingers, and murmured, "Five sleeps."

"Wouldn't David Old Bear bring you?"

"Him gone."

"Where?"

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Her fingers fluttered toward the east as she muttered, "Powwow." Folding her arms again in the blanket, the squaw lapsed into weariness. Gently bathing the foot, Sister Philippa soothed: "Don't feel bad, Grandma. Our Father in Heaven cares much for His Black-foot children."

The squaw bobbed her head and sighed a great "Ah-h-h-h," through her two and only remaining teeth, snagged and yellow.

Powwow . . . Could the Tribal Council be meeting to criticize the Mission's management under Father Jan? . . . she wondered . . . She gathered the rags and rot into a bundle to be burned, then cheerily urged, "Now let's soak the foot a while and then we'll eat."

Seeing the Indian slide her long, thin, pointed tongue over parched lips, the nun went to the sink, washed her hands, filled a glass with cold water, and returned. Running Antelope's eyes opened wide. Fever burned in them. She drank the water in three gulps, smiled through her yellow, snagged teeth, and settled back to soak the sore foot.

The hungry cat meowing insistently pressed against Sister Philippa's feet. "Dear God," she sighed, as she fed the cat, "I'm like this creature, crying out in need. Please help us soon, even as I help this cat."

The old kitchen clock on the north wall above the range ruthlessly struck eleven-thirty. Sister Philippa's face went rigid. Sternly she told her soul, "Philippa, stop this foolish anxiety!" Yet she knew that her heart would go on aching, burning, praying for relief as it had gone on for the past two months.

On schedule, exactly at 11:31 A.M., Father Jan appeared in the kitchen with the old leather mailbag and placed it carefully on the long, galvanized-tin-topped service table. He greeted as usual, "So-o-o?" and started to dart out the door as usual. Sister Philippa called after him, "Thank you, Father, please wait," as she followed him out.

Now it dawned on her why the Indians had named him Sage Hen when he came here two months ago. In the summer noon sun he seemed to her so small and pale, so snugly clad from neckband to toe in heavy, faded, black wear-ever serge cassock, tinged with gray

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and green streaks. "Sage Hen," she mused, "from Maria Einsiedeln in the Alps."

"So-o-o-o?" queried Father Jan, halting at the door, nervously shifting his feet and snapping his left thumb and middle finger together.

Running Antelope, roused from her rest, sat upright, long neck craned, eyes aglint. She took off her bandana and cocked her ears.

"Please, when can we get together to talk business?"

"Business? . . . Attend now to your business, Sister. Food burns on the stove. I will see you later."

He disappeared while Sister Philippa rushed to the range that belched blast-furnace heat. She uncovered the twenty-gallon caldron of mutton stew beginning to boil over.

One whiff of the woolly, tallowy, burnt smell turned her weather-tanned face gray. Her heart implored, "Dear Lord, send us some beef!" She felt akin to the boiling caldron but she couldn't boil over. Running Antelope watched and waited, bathing her sore foot.

Jovial Sister Josephine brought a basketful of fresh-cut bread from the bakery and laid it on the table near the mailbag. Her drenched white headband and wimple showed her power to perspire.

Sister Philippa opened the mailbag and the first letter out caught Sister Josephine's eye. She queried while her Superior read it, breathing heavily, "Any news?"

"Plenty! Read this."

Sister Josephine took the typed note and read it aloud in her Irish brogue:

Father Jan desires to manage the Mission's buying, selling, and book-keeping without your assistance. To save expense of hired help, he wants you to be permanent supervisor in the kitchen. You are reappointed Sister Superior and School Supervisor.

Maternally yours in Our Lord,

MOTHER PROVINCIAL

Running Antelope had leaned forward, curiosity incarnate. Sister Philippa stood like a statue. Her white, starchy, stiff headband and wimple framed her strong face. Her lips were sealed. Her black eyes flashed.



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Sister Josephine returned the letter to her and she thrust it down against the bottom seam of the pocket, hidden under ample folds of her black habit skirt.

Sister Josephine poured out sympathy. "Glory be to God, sure and herself, the Mother Provincial, knows nothing at all, at all about our predicament here . . . and how could she, thousands of miles away? Sure and never for once did she pay us a visit since her appointment a year ago."

Sister Philippa gazed like one in a trance, out the southeast window. The hot wind blew in the aroma of scorched barley fields, a new reminder of misery. Drouth and grasshoppers had ruined the only crop they had raised this year in this treeless, arid area around the gray stone Mission buildings. She felt herself prisoned within this desolate desert, this glaciated, drab back alley behind the majestic heights of Glacier National Park, this back-alley government grant named the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. As far as she could see now, not even a green blade of cheat grass thrived in the basin-like enclosure.

Sister Philippa felt as if she had fatally fallen prey to elements of stress and storm that seemed to pulse throughout the place. Memories of winter blizzards, spring floods, summer sandstorms, hordes of grasshoppers, and death-dealing drouths piled upon her. Overriding all was the dread of imminent bankruptcy, should Father Jan persist in his stubborn Old World ideas and methods.

Sister Josephine's condolences flowed on, as distant to her hearing as the far-off ripple of the low waters of Medicine Creek.

The noon Angelus bell signaled dinner-hour release for the school youngsters and prayer in the Chapel for Sister Josephine.

Running Antelope studied Sister Philippa at the southeast window, praying the Angelus. An aureola from inner peace seemed to fill the air about her as she bowed her head in "Ave Maria!"

A dozen teen-agers presently trooped in, to help serve dinner, banging trays and clattering bowls. Sister Philippa held her post of duty next to the huge stove sending forth fresh waves of blast-furnace heat. She ladled noisome mutton stew into bowls held by the

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lively, joking youngsters. Like a general commanding the noon attack she ruled the operation on hand.

Running Antelope in her corner chair coughed and sloshed her foot about in the water.

Suddenly, Sister Philippa remembered her and stopped to serve her. She heaped a platter with bread, beans, potatoes, and mutton stew, placed it with a mug of milk on a small table, and pushed the table up to waiting Grandma, saying, "Eat all of it . . . after a little while, we'll look at the foot."

Eagerly, Running Antelope agreed. Like a famished hay hand she gorged herself while Sister Philippa went back to serve at the stove.

Blessed imagination! It whisked the nun from the sultry kitchen odors and noises out to the lush, cool Mission cattle lands, ten miles away, exhaling sweet-clover perfume. White-faced Hereford cattle, three-year-olds, two hundred of them, prime for market, grazed under an endless float of white, fluffy clouds in a gossamer turquoise film.

Out of the world, up and on, beyond that ethereal expanse, her heart fled straight to God's Gate in Heaven and knocked: "Our Father, give us this day, this beef, some to eat, the rest to sell, the way we've always done!" Her busy hands flashed, ladling stew until she had filled the last serving bowl. Instantly, her vision vanished and her bodily eyes told her that out of nowhere, it seemed, Father Jan appeared, silent-treading, quick and small, and pale in his greenish-gray-black cassock.

"Sage Hen from Einsiedeln" flashed through her mind. "*Tu es sacerdos in aeternum*" followed like an antiphon.

Father Jan greeted as usual, "So-o-o? You wish to see me?"

"I'm glad you've come, Father. I have a request," Sister Philippa blurted out, taken unaware.

"So-o-o?" he repeated.

"The cattle shipment is overdue; also, we must have beef slaughtered and brought here to eat. We've cooked the last mutton. Will you go soon to the Ranch?"

"Yes—I go today."

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In sheer relief, she doffed her blue-denim apron. Folding it, she said, "Then you'll tell Mike McCann to butcher for us?"

"Ah, yes, Sister . . . but later. First, I go to gather Cataldo herb."

"Cataldo herb?" A cloud passed over the nun's face. "Do you know what it looks like, Father?"

"I will learn about it today. Other plants also here, I shall study. The Indians tell me good medicine grows in the herbs. Cataldo herb cures many ills. Someday, I may erect a pharmacy, a distillery, and market the medicine. Then we shall be financially well founded."

Sister Philippa glanced at the makeshift infirmary corner and her old patient, still soaking an ulcerated foot. She groaned mentally and remarked, "Cataldo herb is sometimes found in bad company."

"Like the wheat amidst the cockle in the Gospel Parable," he commented.

"Yes, Father." Quickly she asked, "Will you please have Mike McCann butcher for us today? We must have meat for the children, even if you and the nuns can live on bread and beans."

Father Jan arose on tiptoe and seemed to add a few inches to his stature. Squaring his small jaw, he asserted, "Sister, I myself, am master here! I manage all . . . alone!"

The nun's knees quaked. The letter she had tried to bury in her pocket just before noon, rose up to taunt her in lines of black demons dancing on white paper in straight lines from left to right: "Father Jan desires to manage the Mission's buying, selling, and bookkeeping without your assistance. To save expense of hired help, he wants you to be permanent supervisor in the kitchen. You are reappointed Sister Superior and School Supervisor . . ."

The squaw watched Sister Philippa turn toward the priest like a mute, accusing soul. She watched Father Jan retreat into his usual humble self, like a deflated thing, sorry.

Quietly, kindly, he almost whispered, "Sister, I do not mean to hurt. It is duty I do . . . you comprehend? . . . Yes?"

"I comprehend." The nun's words fell in a thud.

## GIVE US THIS DAY

"Kerchew!" exploded Grandma in a sneeze. Father Jan jumped to attention. Sister Philippa ventured, "Father, when you drive to the Ranch today, could you take Running Antelope down to her hut on the bend of Two Medicine Creek?"

"But, yes," he agreed eagerly. "Come now, Grandmother, I am ready." She did not budge an inch. Stepping close to the apparently deaf Indian, he shouted, "You know where best Cataldo herb grows? . . . Yes?"

The squaw nodded.

"Then, come, I will drive you in my car. You will show me where to go."

Sister Philippa interrupted: "She has a sore foot."

"So-o-o? But she need not use her foot. I will take her in my car and I will drive her home when I have gathered the herb. Come, Grandmother."

Sister Philippa hastily lifted the well-soaked foot from the pail of water, cut and probed the putrid flesh, anointed and bandaged it, and helped put on the moccasin. Then she landed the squaw on both her feet.

Meanwhile, Father Jan paced back and forth in front of the old sink piled high with pots and pans to be washed.

Sister Philippa cheered heartily, "Up you go now, Grandma!"

Instantly, she winced. Grateful Running Antelope had clinched the nun's right hand in a bony vise, an Indian "Thank-you" clasp.

Relieved from the grip the nun commented, "You've got plenty left yet. 'Bye, now . . . come tomorrow."

Sundown that day. Supper was over. Sister Philippa wearily turned the creaky handle on the meat grinder attached to the galvanized-tin-topped table. Rythmically, she ground out gristly remains of great-grandsire sheep, the inedible leftover from the noon meal to serve tomorrow. Rhythmically, the old wall clock told off time.

"Dear Lord," she prayed, "send us some beef, somehow!" And she finished grinding for the morrow's meal.

Evening shadows were settling over the Mission. Sister Philippa was alone in the kitchen. She lit the kerosene lamp on the table.



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She lit a lantern and hung it outside the southeast window. "How long, O Lord, how long! Now it's two months since that Delco electric-light system has been off kilter," she deplored, peering out into the dusk.

Mike McCann should be driving down the road at any moment now, she told herself. Why was he late? Where could he be? How much longer must she keep his supper in the warming oven?

The nine o'clock prayer bell was tolling in the Mission Church when Mike arrived. He slumped into his chair and sighed. After a long moment, Sister Philippa asked, "What now, Mike?"

"A heck of a mess! Father Jan got into a poison ivy patch and pulled up a bushel basketful of roots, stems, and leaves. Then he fell—sunstroke, I guess. I found him lying on the patch."

Sister Philippa gasped, "O Lord! What next? Where is he now?"

"In the Agency Hospital. Here's a letter."

She took the envelope addressed to her. "Do you mind if I read it now?"

"Go ahead, Sister."

She turned away to read the letter under the lantern light in the window:

DEAR SISTER SUPERIOR [the letter said]: Father Jan must be hospitalized for a mild sunstroke and a bad case of poison ivy infection. He has asked me to write an order from him authorizing you to assume complete management of the Mission. Whatever you do will be satisfactory with him.

Respectfully,

DON CONRAD, M.D.

She murmured out the window to God in the night: "Thank You, Our Father in Heaven! But I never asked You to give him sick leave. Be merciful, ease his pain, but please keep him there till we butcher and pack our beef and sell the rest. Keep him there until we pay our bills and order next year's supplies and balance our books."

The hard lump that had been growing in her throat for two months seemed to melt. Happy, warm tears washed all sorrow out of her star-gazing eyes.

## GIVE US THIS DAY

She turned to Mike McCann. "Cheer up, Mike! While you wash your hands, I'll lay your supper on the table. The letter was good news. We've got the green light to go ahead. Tomorrow you butcher and close the cattle deal. I'll order supplies. God be praised! Now we can carry on the way we've always done."

Next morning Sister Philippa was ladling breakfast oatmeal from the twenty-gallon caldron. Indian youngsters were scurrying to and fro on the kitchen serving squad. They made way for Running Antelope, who limped in, leaning on her stick.

"Hi, Grandma!" Sister Philippa welcomed, "How's the foot?"

"Good," smiled the squaw.

"Come, eat," invited the nun. "I'll fix your foot later."

Running Antelope sat at the table and waited. Servers and breakfast stuff were soon cleared out of the kitchen and Sister Philippa was free to talk with Grandma while she served her cereal.

"Did you go to the Ranch with Father Jan?"

"Ah-h-h-h," smiled Grandma.

"Did you take him to the poison ivy patch?"

"Ah-h-h-h." She bobbed her head in triumph.

"You wanted to fool him?"

"Ah-h-h-h," she whistled a queer little laugh.

"You bad Grandma!" chided the nun.

"You good Sister!" grinned Grandma, gulping mush.

# COMMUNISM AND SOUTH ASIA

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*by W. Gordon Graham*

BY THE END of 1950 the expanding flood of totalitarian communism in Asia had reached the line of the Himalayas—the greatest physical defense barrier in the world. It had also reached another and much greater barrier—a regenerated United Nations Organization resolved to halt military aggression.

Although Russia, at this writing, is not yet at war in a military sense, it has not lost the political initiative. So long as it has land borders on Eurasia it can initiate repeat performances of Korea, whenever, wherever, and on whatever scale it chooses, dissipating the forces of the United States and its allies and consuming their resources, without the use of its own arms or manpower. This applies especially to South Asia, to which Russia, blocked on the east and west, is likely now to pay increased attention. Moves southward into Asia will not impinge so directly on areas in which the United States is vitally interested. Moreover, South Asia is by no means so ready to accept United States aid in combating communism as have been Western Europe and Eastern Asia. The dregs of colonialism leave still a bitter taste in the mouths of the South Asian peoples, a fact of which Soviet propaganda has made full use in the past five years.

Furthermore, the aspiring nationalisms of South Asia lend themselves readily to that kind of political-subversive warfare in which world communism specializes. They abound in petty separatism, which is always fertile ground for Communist seed. Fresh from centuries of direct or indirect imperialist aggression, they are congenitally suspicious of the motives of any Western power and as a complement of these suspicions are not unfriendly to the Soviets—their fellow Asians. Soviet propaganda in South Asia plays skillfully on Asian solidarity and Asian freedom. World communism may lose the battle of Korea, but in winning it the United Nations have already lost a lot of Asian sympathy, simply because the

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Korean war has Asians on one side and Occidentals on the other. News-film shots of Superforts bombing North Korean targets raise boos and hisses in many Indian cinemas.

The coming Soviet offensive in South Asia will adapt itself to these favorable conditions. Russia has no reason to employ direct aggression against nations in which it can see potent internal factors working on its behalf. This makes, for the moment, the two barriers to a southward military march—the physical one of the mountainous terrain and the moral barrier of UN strength—irrelevant. The Soviet *Putsch* in South Asia will aim, for the foreseeable future, to by-pass these two obstacles.

With the Chinese occupation of Tibet, Russia's Asian curtain runs now on a well-defined line from the Black Sea to the Pacific Ocean along the northern borders of Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Burma, and French Indo-China. This line includes not only the mighty Himalayas, but also four other great mountain ranges, the Caucasus, Elburz, Hindu Kush, and Karakorams. Plainly it is a line easier to penetrate with ideas than with armies. The line has a number of weak points, where Communist violence in the name of freedom or patriotism has already come into the open—notably Indo-China, Burma, and Azerbaijan. In other parts, such as Assam, Nepal, and northern Afghanistan, Communist activity is as yet subversive. These are all soft spots into which communism is infiltrating, using the circumstances of each place and each moment to the best advantage.

The weakest feature of this line from the point of view of the non-Communist world is the lack of cohesion of its parts. The nations of South Asia have not yet felt the unifying compulsion of the Soviet threat, as have the nations of Western Europe. An attack on one will not be considered an attack on all. India looks with indifference on the insurrection in Burma because it feels Burmese independence must be respected. Yet the whole area is so interdependent that independence in any exclusive sense has no meaning and a weak Burmese government is a weak point for India and its other neighbors no less than for itself. A similar detachment is exhibited toward Indo-China, though here Asian sympathies lie more with the



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Viet Minh than the Viet Nam because the latter is identified with a colonial power. In Afghanistan the desire for self-containment works the other way. Soviet activity among the tribes in its northern territory goes on under a cloak of secrecy which the Afghans themselves obligingly provide because they consider that whatever happens in Afghan territory is purely their business.

On the northern side of the Asian curtain, on the other hand, there is complete unity of purpose. Each move is planned and timed in the way best to suit the purpose of Communist world conquest. The plan is made to appear spasmodic and spontaneous by turning the spotlight of publicity quickly from one area to another. Thus, setbacks in Korea are covered by the invasion of Tibet. Attention is quickly diverted from Tibet to Nepal. As Nepal fades into the background (for a time), an offensive mounts in Indo-China. And so on. Even if the nations of South Asia were united and alert in their resistance to communism, these diversionary tactics would be difficult to handle.

Not only are the nations of South Asia muddled and disunited in their assessment of the purpose of world communism, but some of them are attempting political independence and economic self-sufficiency to a degree which might ultimately prove suicidal. The grossest examples of this trend are India and Pakistan. Even had the partition of India been inevitable because of religious differences, common sense should have dictated that the area remain an economic unit. Instead, India and Pakistan are spending their resources in defense against each other and their energies producing goods and material which they could supply to each other. These two nations ought to be leading the others in building a sound economy for the whole area, for this alone can raise the general standard of living and effectively combat the Communist canker within. Other lesser quarrels such as that between Pakistan and Afghanistan over the future of the Pathans, or between India and Nepal over the Rana regime, all help to provide handy grist for the Soviet mill.

A striking feature of what must now be regarded as the South Asian defense line against Soviet Russia is that it is strong on the flanks and weak in the center. On its eastern extremity, the French,

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backed increasingly by American arms, are putting up a stiff resistance against the Communist Viet Minh. On the western flank, Turkey is firmly committed to the United Nations' cause. These two nations are outposts of the European (or eastward) and Asian (or westward) defense lines of the United States. There is no complementary (northward-looking) defense line linking these. The nearer we look to the center of the 6,000-mile line of demarcation between Communist and non-Communist Asia, the greater the military weakness of the non-Communist nations. Some of them, for example Afghanistan and Burma, are so lacking in resources and so indefensible that a determined onslaught would swallow them up perhaps as easily as the Chinese took Tibet. But there is one country which by its size, resources, and geographic position becomes the apex of the whole line and the chief determinant factor in the future of South Asia.

That country is India.

In the light of the world struggle between totalitarianism and democracy, India is the greatest paradox of our time. Politically, as the world's biggest and newest practicing democracy, its affiliations lie naturally with the Anglo-American group of nations. Economically and socially, on the other hand, its huge population (one-sixth of the world's), its low standard of living, and its agrarian economy, all overlaid with an awakening social sense, suggest that it must follow the path of revolution as Russia and China have done before it. India has endeavored to solve this paradox in the first three years of its free history by neutrality abroad and a self-sufficiency drive at home—the classic policy of isolationism. Its foreign and home policies in this period have been a whole series of *via medias* and halfway houses. Roughly speaking, the Indian government, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, has leaned as far as it dares toward the Western democracies, straining against the unexpressed but present and powerful urge of the Indian people toward radicalism.

Thus, for example, India has condemned imperialism, but in practice has managed to stay within the British Commonwealth. It has outlawed colonialism, but has tolerated French and Portuguese sovereignty over parts of its free soil. It has consistently refrained

from committing itself to United Nations votes which might be construed as anti-Communist. It has espoused socialism, but permitted capitalism in its least socialistic forms. It has deposed the feudal princes of India's states, but has allowed them to retain their huge material possessions and substantial incomes. The Congress Government of India follows these policies of compromise not only in deference to the people it governs, but because it conceives that the only way to save India from embroilment in the threatened world war is to tread delicately between the two main opposing forces of the world.

This path, India has now discovered, leads it along a tightrope on which its twin policies of neutrality and self-sufficiency do not help it to balance. In fact, the two are in conflict, because the one demands outside economic aid while the other discourages it. For its economic development India needs foreign capital, raw materials, industrial equipment, and technical guidance on a large scale. There is no sign that any of this help could come from Russia, but every sign that it could come from the United States. The obvious way to get it—quickly—has been to proclaim alignment with American foreign policy and incur the enmity of Soviet Russia—incur it, that is, in so far as non-Communist India does not already have it. India has hoped, however, to achieve the necessary speed of economic progress by its own efforts, combined with such private and official foreign investment as it might be able to obtain without strings attached. So far these hopes have not been fulfilled. By 1950 it was clear that if India was to build factories, develop hydro-electricity, improve its agricultural output, or accomplish on an effective scale any of the other tasks necessary to its internal stability, it would require much greater economic aid than is at present available or promised.

Meanwhile, events on India's northern borders and beyond its eastern borders have warned it that its neutral foreign policy may not be tenable much longer. Thus, political pressure without is combining with economic frustration within to drive India toward a closer alignment with the Western democracies. These influences, however, are felt only by India's government and its literate minor-



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ity. Its 350,000,000 people are for the most part unconscious of them, and indeed are subject to influences of a quite different nature. This fact is of vital importance in estimating the possible success or failure of totalitarian communism in India, or in South Asia, to which India is the key. A government's intentions are not the criterion of evolving history, and in a country which is 85 percent illiterate this is especially true. The ultimate say lies with the economic and social conditions of the people. It would be folly to pretend that these conditions in India do not favor communistic developments. The government can lead the people, but the people will follow only so far as their economic needs are simultaneously and progressively satisfied.

The mounting battle between totalitarian communism and individualist democracy in South Asia will therefore not be primarily a political or military struggle. It will be primarily economic. Communist promises are directed mainly at the ignorant, the poor, and the hungry, descriptions which fit the great majority of the Indian people. Only as the number of hungry, poor, and ignorant people is reduced will the danger of communism recede. Since the danger is imminent, this calls for economic and industrial progress in five, ten, or fifteen years such as it has taken the West several centuries of trial and error to achieve. South Asia's fate in the twentieth century seems to depend on the extent to which it can telescope history. This it will not be able to do on its own resources.

The struggle for South Asia thus becomes for its next phase a race between the young Asian national governments and the disruptive Communist elements within their countries. While the governments struggle to satisfy the natural aspirations of their peoples toward better living, the Communists will work to distort these aspirations into anarchy and chaos and to induce a piecemeal instability throughout the whole area which will ultimately invite open Communist conquest. Although it might look as if there were no state of war until these conquests begin, it is well to realize that the present phase is part of world communism's sense of total war. If the governments of India and other non-Communist Asian countries are to combat communism in this phase effectively, they must



regard their own economic development as a task deserving all the concentration, the industry, the organization, and the vision that are usually employed in a war of survival.

In this phase of the war, subversive communism within India and other Asian countries has as its faithful ally, Soviet Russia. The Cominform provides the unity, the drive, and the planning which knit Indian communism into its world plan. It is a cheap kind of war for Russia, which in its ideological offensives lives on the resources of the land in which it is fighting, just as the Red Army is wont to do in its military offensives.

The governments of South Asia, on their side, have as co-operative—but not yet wholly accepted—allies the United States, the British Commonwealth, and the other non-Communist nations. Unfortunately, the Asian governments are still suspicious that some new form of imperialist exploitation (perhaps motivated by excess production of goods) is cloaked in the Western nations' desire to render economic help, while on the other side this help is limited by American doubts of non-Communist Asia as a sound long-term investment. This objection does not apply so much to British capitalism, which has a much greater stake in the country and much more confidence in India's future. An American manufacturer, prospecting in Bombay, was heard to say that he was not interested unless the proposition would enable him to clear a good profit and clear out in ten years. The management of a new British automobile factory in the same city, on the other hand, says that the factory is not expected to make any profit for the first ten years.

Private capital, however, will never alone solve the problem. Specifically, the outcome of the South Asian struggle against communism depends (1) on the extent to which the United States' global successor to the Marshall Plan (as outlined in the Gray Report) caters for India and its neighbors, and (2) the speed with which it can be implemented in the face of Asian suspicion of Western exploiting motives and its disapproval of surviving colonialism.

A major element in reaching a working basis for economic aid and then in ensuring that it accomplishes the positive result that it intends, is effective propaganda. It is true that there is no more

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effective propaganda for a hungry man than a full stomach. But unless he is told at the same time where his food comes from, how it was produced, and why he received it, communism will be ready to waste the whole economic effort (as it did in China) by misrepresentation of American motives. The Communists undoubtedly hope to take over one day in India (again as in China) whatever bounty the United States may pour in. To prevent this, the expansion of Point Four aid must be accompanied by an expansion of the United States Information Services which will enable them to speak in the villages. At present they touch only the top layer of Indian society.

In the propaganda war, too, Soviet Russia fights the cheap, easy way and leaves the elaborate and cumbersome effort of the West to flounder. Radio Moscow is Russia's only direct Russian-sponsored propaganda. Its Asian-language programs have talked peace (Indians are natural pacifists) for the past year and have been clearly heard, while the Voice of America has been frequently jammed. But most Russian propaganda is done by Indians—unpaid. In the fields of culture, industry, and agriculture, Indian communism is a strictly Indian movement. This alone makes it hard to combat. Further, it carries a promise for the underprivileged which is both crude and subtle, and which never has to be fulfilled because it can point always to the presence of "reactionary forces" as an obstacle to fulfillment. Western democracy, on the other hand, which really has something to promise the underdog, has no parallel to the Communist appeal. Plainly, Western democracy has somehow and urgently to translate its great spiritual heritage and its great principle of individual freedom into terms just as compelling as the Communist message. This is even more important than the full stomach. It is also immeasurably more difficult. It means that the Western concept of democracy—represented not unworthily by the present government of India—must become identified with the great social revolution which is under way throughout Asia, and not, as is at present falsely imputed to it, with reactionary Rightism. Like communism, democracy has to move in Asia along with the natural force of human aspiration from a lower to a higher standard

of living. The better of the two ideologies will then win on its merits.

In the meantime, the sincere nationalism, the emotional fervor and the local loyalties of the South Asian peoples are all unconscious allies of the Communist cause. So is the lack of unity which these conditions induce. A continued low standard of living, struggling upward, lends itself only to the kind of unity which is imposed from without. It does not unify itself naturally and farsightedly as, for example, the United States once did in the year 1787 in a crucial stage of its history. This imposed unity was of the kind which the British Empire gave to India for two hundred years. The country was held together; it did not hold itself together. The political and religious fissions which have followed the country's independence must be regarded with satisfaction at the Kremlin. The longer they continue, the more will India be regarded as a ripening plum which will one day fall into waiting Communist hands. The imposed unity stemming from Moscow would be a different proposition from the comparatively enlightened rule which the British practiced in the latter years of their Indian administration. It would be autocratic, harsh, and repressive.

The lesson of the analysis is that only something entirely new in the way of economic and social progress can forestall the march of communism in South Asia. That something new is in essence the global conscience of the American people and all free nations, and its most important expression must be freely given economic aid. The whole situation of South Asia today is a race between the revolutionary upsurge of its peoples, as experienced in China and Russia, and the visionary interposition of economic aid to delay these forces, build quickly a new and better economy, and unify the people on a supranational doctrine conjoining self-interest with world interest. It calls for a new kind of civilization, which will operate as a positive harmonizing force and not as the series of disasters, setbacks, and successes which history has so far shown civilization to be.

The main weakness on the democratic side is nationalism. On the one hand, American nationalism tends to prevent disinterested



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participation in South Asia's problems, while, on the other, Asian nationalism plans for self-containment and looks with suspicion on any outside help. World communism has largely dismissed the conception of nationalism, and proceeds unhampered by its inherent shortcomings. Free nationalisms tend to remain disunited until circumstances drive them together—perhaps too late to save themselves. This is the most fundamental respect in which the global conscience of the West must show the way to non-Communist Asia. Economic co-operation between and gradual political integration of Asian countries must accompany economic aid to make it do its job—even as the O.E.E.C. in Europe has accompanied the Marshall Plan. The Colombo Plan shows how the British Commonwealth can help to lend to South Asia the economic cohesion which it so badly lacks. The only thing the Colombo Plan lacks is capital, and this deficiency, amounting to about \$2,000,000,000, the Gray Report shows the United States is likely to make good. Then the only dangerous lack will be lack of time.

Korea has shown that the United Nations, led by the United States, are ready to play their part in the defense of non-Communist Asia. Only if the war in South Asia passes, as has happened in East Asia, from the economic to the military phase, might the UN find the defense of South Asia a task too great to be undertaken. At present, India and much of South Asia are reasonably stable. Their economic build-up now will cost much less than their military preservation in the future. It is already too late to apply this constructive method in countries such as Indo-China and Burma. The task in these countries is already military. But in India it is not too late. It is just the right time for an all-out offensive against India's three greatest enemies—and communism's three staunchest allies—poverty, ignorance, and hunger.

The most important question now is, will India be ready to accept wholeheartedly economic co-operation with the West? At the moment the answer is still No. India still conceives its role in the world as a balancing factor between East and West, as a peaceful neutral zone in either the cold or the hot war, and as an advocate of compromise which it believes might make it the peacemaker of the



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world. In any case, Indians simply do not believe in the altruism of American investment, private or public, though their distrust could doubtless be overcome by appointing the UN as the channel of aid. India's views are, however, changing—slightly. The invasion of Tibet has rudely shaken its faith in Asian solidarity and its conviction that the Chinese accession to communism was a purely agrarian revolution. Civil war in Nepal is now drawing New Delhi's attention to the necessity of a strong defense on its northern borders. These events are also uniting in Indian thought for the first time the expansionism of world communism and the activities of the Indian Communists.

Until June 1950 the Communist party of India was committed to a program of violence. It had prosecuted this program for two years and in doing so had alienated the public, invited suppression by a government which was prepared to be friendly, and lost most of its fellow travelers. These last are especially important to the party, which claims a membership of only 80,000—an absurdly small figure in a population of 350,000,000. Their fellow travelers are those who, without professing communism, admire Russia, or what they think Russia is, and believe that communism is the hope of India's masses. The Communist party's extensive sabotage in 1948 and 1949, combined with murder, intimidation, arson, and other forms of crime, drove away many of these hopefuls, some of them into India's up-and-coming Socialist party, which espouses a policy of peaceful revolution more in keeping with Indian pacifism.

The Communists in 1950 came to see that their rough policy was a mistaken one. It is worth tracing the events which led them to this realization. While a political analysis of the position of India's Communist party is not a guide to the progress of communism in India, the policies adopted by this party at various stages do illustrate its reading—or misreading—of the social and economic revolution in India which the Communists believe is reacting in their favor. The Chinese Communists also made extensive use in the last twenty years of their country's natural conditions—poverty, disunity, and misgovernment—to fight in their favor.

If, however, the processes which took place in China were to begin

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in India, it is likely, because of the pressure of events elsewhere, that they would be telescoped into a shorter period of time. A prominent Indian Communist said recently, "What took twenty years to achieve in China can happen in India in five years, or at the most ten. This is an age of quick changes." Yet it is only on the surface that changes are quick, and in assessing the chances of communism in India it has to be remembered that the undersurface ferment which may or may not boil up into a Communist revolution has been subject to powerful opposing influences which were not present in China.

Chief of these influences was, until 1942, the British Government of India. It is believed that organized communism started in India in 1924. It was about this time that Zinoviev said, "The Achilles' heel of the British Empire is India, and we must therefore make every effort to develop all possible lines of advance there." The British opposed the Indian Communist party as soon as it started, and it remained an illegal body until 1942, when Russia's entry into the Nazi war compelled an official *volte-face*, as it did in other Allied countries. This twenty-year ban did not, however, stop Comintern-inspired activity aimed at violent overthrow of the government of India. The famous Meerut conspiracy case of 1929-33, in which three Englishmen and thirty-four Indians were sentenced for conspiring to "deprive the King-Emperor of his authority in India," gave a glimpse, though probably no more than a glimpse, of the extent of the Communist program.

During the period of their suppression the Communists made common cause with the Indian National Congress party, setting India's independence from British rule as the paramount aim. Secretly they considered the Congress as a "bourgeois" national reform movement. Their real loyalties were shown in 1942, when, emerging into unexpected legality, they volunteered to co-operate in the British war effort. This caused an immediate split with the Congress. Thus in 1945 the Indian Communists found themselves in a difficult position, paralleled in no other country. In that year most of the Communist parties of the world were basking in the sunlight of democratic favor, hailed as liberators, allies, and patriots.

But in India, the Communists were traitors—they had fought for the British.

They have not yet recovered from this estrangement from Indian public opinion, occasioned by a lack of patriotism which, their fellow Indians rightly concluded, was due to their allegiance to a foreign power. To be sure, the moment World War II was over the Communists turned with ease to a virulent anti-British policy and announced unqualified support of the Nehru government. But it was too late to infiltrate back into India's great nationalist movement. In 1945 they were officially expelled from the Congress party. Thus the wartime alliance with Russia, which proved in the post-war years an ill wind in most Allied nations, blew some good in India.

In spite of general ostracism, the Communists followed for some time a policy of moderate government support. There was indeed, for the moment, no alternative. But by August 1947 the field was once more clear. The new Indian government was in. The revolution could recommence on a fresh basis. Unofficially, of course, it had never stopped. Its recommencement was signaled by the Second Congress of the Communist party of India from February 28 to March 6, 1948, which discarded P. C. Joshi, the party's General Secretary since 1936, and adopted in his place B. T. Ranadive, leader of a group advocating a violent revolutionary program. The new central committee then issued a policy statement which amounted to an indictment of the Nehru administration. The same government which the Communists previously had been wooing vigorously, and with whom they had co-operated for upward of two decades, became overnight the embodiment of the Indian *bourgeoisie*, whose object was the suppression of the workers and peasants and whose foreign policy was based on co-operation with the "Anglo-American imperialists." This statement was worded so uncompromisingly as to amount to a declaration of war on the government, which did not fail to notice that the change of policy coincided with a general Communist offensive throughout the world.

This indictment was in some respects a shrewd move. It contained just that grain of credibility among its mass of lies which



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might trick some Indians into sympathy. For by 1948 the Congress party had already traveled some distance from the socialistic policy it has espoused in its revolutionary days. (Jawaharlal Nehru once described himself as a "half-Communist" and has always been regarded as a vague type of Socialist.) The Congress party had later become something of a paradox, having a socialist doctrine with capitalist backing, the two united by their shared desire to get rid of the British. When it came into power, its socialist promises inevitably suffered modification or postponement; the capitalist backing has so far remained.

As a result, the middle classes, India's small but important intelligentsia, became bitterly disappointed in the Congress. The high cost of living fed their dissatisfaction, and many of them began to turn to the Socialists. Observation of this leftist trend helped the Communists to decide that a policy of compromise was no longer tactical. Their "declaration of war," moreover, brought the party publicly into line with developments in China, Indo-China, Burma, and Malaya and thus enabled them to plug Moscow's "Asian solidarity" theme. In any case, it was only a public declaration of a policy which they had always pursued under cover. Throughout the years 1942 to 1948, when the Communists had been officially loyal first to the British Government and then to the free Indian government, they had never ceased to be clandestine troublemakers. Such events as the textile strikes at Amalner and Coimbatore, peasant agitation among the Worli tribes, and widespread railway sabotage since 1947—plus similar trouble in hundreds of places throughout India—were due to Communist instigation.

The Indian Communists' new militant policy appeared foolish in the sense that it was merely asking for trouble. The Nehru government, unlike its British predecessor, had so far refrained from aggressive action against the Communists, partly in deference to the moderate policy of the Joshi group. Moreover, they wanted to maintain the unity which under British rule had so long characterized the Indian political scene. But after the Communists threw down the glove so openly, the government had no alternative but to meet force with force. During 1948, violence was widespread, espe-



cially in Hyderabad State and around Calcutta. By February 1949, three thousand leading Communists were in jail. In West Bengal, and later in Madras State, the Communist party was banned, but New Delhi did not suppress the party per se, doubtless to keep in line with its foreign policy toward Russia. The Communists, on their side, put into action what was apparently a carefully planned scheme of disruption, working through such bodies as the All-India Students Federation, the *Kisan Sabha* (peasants' union), and the trade unions. But they were blocked in every direction and the whole thing was a failure. By mid-1949 the premature and ineffective revolution had begun to die away. In September the government issued a seventy-one-page booklet entitled *Communist Violence in India*, which was plainly intended to be a postscript to the whole affair. The booklet disclosed a calculated plan to overthrow ordered government.

There is no doubt that this plan had been put into practice on instruction from Moscow. The expulsion of Joshi followed a clandestine meeting of Asian Communists in Calcutta, attended by several unnamed Russians. The Indian uprising synchronized with insurrections in Burma, Malaya, and Indonesia. It fitted in with Moscow's year-long tirade in 1948 against the Nehru regime as an ally of "Anglo-American imperialism." The Russian master-planners seemed to have concluded that the success of Mao Tse-tung in China was the signal for a general offensive in Asia. So far as India was concerned they could not have made a bigger mistake, for the Indian Communists gained nothing and lost what little sympathy the Indian public still had for them after their British collaboration period.

In 1949, Russia launched its great "peace" offensive, based, later on, on the Stockholm Peace Appeal. The extreme militancy of the Communist party of India under Ranadive fitted ill with this. It was all very well for the Communists of Indo-China or Malaya or the Philippines to stand on a policy of violence; these were "people's movements" against "reactionary" regimes. Nehru's India, which was by now emerging as perhaps the world's most genuine exponent of peace, could by no stretching of facts be similarly clas-

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sified. So, on January 27, 1950, the Cominform issued fresh instructions to the now thoroughly confused Indian Communists to identify themselves with the peace movement. Obedient but puzzled, the party changed its policy again. On July 19, 1950, it was announced that Ranadive had resigned, to be replaced by Rajeshwar Rao. Since then the party has been trying to unite itself once again on a more gradualist platform. It will not go back to the "rightist deviationism" for which Joshi was discarded, but will endeavor to identify itself with the liberation of the masses in a peaceful way, meanwhile accusing the Congress Government, as it turns more to America for economic aid, of seeking to make India a base for war against Russia. It will also play on the Indian fear of embroilment in a world war.

It can thus be seen that if Communist success in India depended on the Indian Communist party, it would have been bungled into failure long ago. To understand why it has not failed, it is necessary to distinguish between political communism, which is thoroughly unpopular in India today, and idealist Marxism, which is not in disrepute at all. The latter is deeply in tune with modern India and is the only philosophy of natural appeal to India's awakening masses. The Indian Communist party will not come into its own until the violence stage is reached.

Although Indian Communists will pursue the phony peace program in most parts of India, there is one part which is likely to be an exception—the state of Assam. Assam is almost cut off from India by East Pakistan. In addition, it shares borders with Tibet, China, and Burma. Provided India and Pakistan do not evolve a common defense policy—and the Communist aim is to keep India and Pakistan apart—Assam holds a strategic position which will probably encourage the Communists to open insurrection. Following the recent earthquake there, the local Communists took advantage of the chaos to murder and intimidate loyal Indians.

While Assam is India's strategically weak spot, the fundamental weakness not only in India but throughout Asia, which provides communism always with a convenient handle, is not territorial. It is racial—the historic split between East and West. The racial

## W. GORDON GRAHAM

affinities among all Asians, to whom the Russians themselves belong, are Soviet communism's strongest card in Asia. Even if the West were not hampered by its imperialist record, the healing of this global schism, rooted in three thousand years of history, would be a frighteningly hard task. Yet only in an effective union of East and West does any ultimate answer lie to the threat that totalitarianism will swallow those Asian peoples who are not yet in its grip.

Undoubtedly the most practical and hopeful expression of this vitally needed union ever conceived lies in President Truman's Point Four program, in the Gray Report, and in the co-operative principle of the Colombo Plan. Another essential step toward this great goal is that Britain, France, and the United States should make convincing and absolute declarations that their intentions in Asia are free of self-interest—and back up these declarations by every measure short of withdrawal. Withdrawal now would be a disaster; it would merely create a power vacuum into which Russia would walk. But the confidence of the Vietnamese, the Malayans, and other Asian nations has to be gained. If it is not, the economic aid to the whole area, no matter how extensive, will not accomplish its purpose.

In South Asia, Western democracy is swimming against the tide. Totalitarian communism is swimming with it. This is the measure of the effort that Western democracy has to make. The stake is high—none could be higher than its own survival and the freedom of the world. It was Lenin who said, "the road from Moscow to Paris lies through Peking, Shanghai, and Calcutta." Thirty-three years of Soviet history have done nothing to invalidate that statement.

## *Sonnet Out of Illness*

AGNES BRACHER

What do they know of fear who look upon  
The blue arch of the sky with casual eyes?  
They ask no questions of the rain; the sun  
Gives them complacent warmth—and no surprise.  
If violent wind lashes their patterned bower  
Of garden, they are rueful but unmoved,  
For in the scattered petals of a flower  
They do not see man's pitiful story proved.

These need no courage, for they see no dark  
And imminent doom; their blindness is their light.  
But there are those who boast no guiding spark,  
Who walk in fear by day, in fear by night.  
These are the brave, who bear no light at all,  
But stumble on and hope and dare not fall.



# EDITH WHARTON TODAY

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by Blake Nevius

IT IS DIFFICULT to think of a twentieth-century American novelist whose reputation has suffered more from the change of interests and narrowing of emphasis in the literature of the 'thirties than has Edith Wharton's. To a generation of writers nurtured on social realism, young men for whom, as Leslie Fiedler recalls, "abandoning oneself to the proletariat and finding oneself as an artist seemed a single act," she had nothing to teach except by way of negative example. She had always been put down as something of a snob, but the experience of the depression years had the effect, among critics and writers at least, of exaggerating the limitations of her social ideal. The faint air of exasperation and the conscious hauteur which occasionally informed the pages written in her lonely old age did nothing to temper this impression. "At present," she complained in *A Backward Glance* (1934), "the demand is that only the man with the dinner pail shall be deemed worthy of attention, and fiction is classed according to its degree of conformity to this rule." No one was more aware than Mrs. Wharton of the prevailing shift of sympathy and its unfortunate effect on her reputation. As the triumph of proletarian literature became more obvious, the phrase "the man with the dinner pail," appearing in several of her essays, acquired the bitterly symbolic overtones of Yeats's "Huxley, Tyndall, Carolus Duran, and Bastien-Lepage." As with Yeats, it served the purpose of focusing her resentment on a scapegoat.

To readers who knew her only through her later novels, with their slightly rasping tone and their old-fashioned technical competence, she must have seemed merely a survival of the first generation of realists, whose fruitless attempt to react upon the drift of a changing tradition had soured her hopelessly, as similar attempts had soured so many gifted writers of her generation. Even those who judged

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her, if not by the wrong novels, at least by those which gave a limited view of her achievement (mainly *Ethan Frome* and *The Age of Innocence*), were too badly informed to make any lasting evaluation of her work. Somehow, in spite of the reminders of such critics as Edmund Wilson, Diana Trilling, and Q. D. Leavis, the Edith Wharton who wrote *The House of Mirth*, *The Custom of the Country*, and *The Reef* has been neglected. Yet by any standard of assessment these three novels must be reckoned among her best. Technically, they are far superior to anything produced in that gray transition period between the death of Frank Norris and the first World War, and although as sociological documents they are less comprehensive than the novels of Robert Herrick, David Graham Phillips, and Upton Sinclair, they make their unique contribution to a survey of American society, conducted in the early years of the century, which is unsurpassed in our literature.

It is a sign, though not an infallible one, of her waning reputation that she has been slighted by recent anthologists. Twenty years ago, no account of the American experience abroad would have overlooked the evidence of her many novels, short stories, travel books, and miscellaneous essays, to say nothing of her efforts on behalf of the French cause and the French and Belgian refugees in the early years of World War I; yet Philip Rahv's recent *Discovery of Europe* manages to do just that. Although the best of her early short stories have enabled her to maintain a precarious footing in many college anthologies of American literature, the best seller in this group, Norman Foerster's *American Poetry and Prose*, is unable to find room for her alongside O. Henry and Hamlin Garland. The implication, I suppose, is that she can no longer hold her place by virtue of her craftsmanship alone and that her subject for the most part has been better handled by Henry James. Nevertheless, she is still read, if only by those who do not watch the barometers of literary taste, and the indications are that her audience is by no means small. She has had a kind of revenge on the man with the dinner pail, for he symbolizes an era which already seems as remote as that chronicled in *The Age of Innocence*, and his sponsors have been the vic-

tims of a critical reaction no less overwhelming than that which she encountered in the 'thirties.

The objections to the view of life expressed in her fiction have not come entirely from the left. Even the conservative critics agree that she was too well bred, too narrow in her social outlook, too chillingly rational in her treatment of experience to be able to convince us always of the genuineness of her sympathies or to maintain a real hold on the affection of the reading public. These are partially valid objections, and they have barred Edith Wharton from the first rank of novelists writing in English; but they do not apply equally to all her fiction and they are by no means, as some critics have implied, the whole truth about her art and personality. Those who think of her as merely well bred or unexceptionably narrow should ponder well Arthur Mizener's anecdote of F. Scott Fitzgerald's visit to the Pavillon Colombe, where he had been invited by Mrs. Wharton for tea.\* Fitzgerald, mildly drunk and on the defensive, set about to shock the company. Having first told his hostess that she knew nothing about life and been disappointed at the good humor of her reply, he invented the story that when he and Zelda first came to Paris they had lived for two weeks in a bordello. "Instead . . . of the horrified response that he had expected," Mr. Mizener relates, "Mrs. Wharton and her guests were all looking at him with unfeigned and perfectly sincere interest." When Fitzgerald, by now embarrassed, faltered in his account, his hostess urged him on: "But, Mr. Fitzgerald . . . you haven't told us what they did in the bordello." At which the guest excused himself and fled back to Paris to pour out his humiliation to Zelda. "Nearly all of the Fitzgerald of the period," Mr. Mizener concludes, "and a good deal of the history of two literary generations, is in that anecdote." I am not sure what is meant by this last remark, but it is clear that Fitzgerald and his contemporaries, like so many who have followed them, forgot all too quickly that Edith Wharton in her day had dealt candidly with her material—so candidly that, as she re-

\* My excuse for including this by now hackneyed anecdote is twofold. This essay was written before Mr. Mizener's biography of Fitzgerald appeared and before the story lost its freshness through successive retellings in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Life*, and *Time*. I have retained it because its point, as I understand it, is still worth stressing.



calls in her memoirs, one indignant reader asked her if she had ever known a decent woman. To give her credit, she was less likely to be offended by plain speaking than by the kind of personal dishonesty that Fitzgerald displayed on this occasion.

That she sometimes found it difficult to preserve her detachment is unfortunately true: many of her novels, including some of the best, are weakened by the force of her prejudices. Undine Spragg, in *The Custom of the Country*, becomes increasingly the victim of her creator's antipathy, until she emerges in the final chapters as the most dehumanized female in American fiction. And beginning with this novel, Mrs. Wharton's treatment of Middle Western culture is extravagantly satirical. It is no more trenchant than that of Sinclair Lewis, whom she so curiously anticipates, but Lewis' protest arises from a close and even sympathetic knowledge of his subject, whereas Mrs. Wharton's appears to stem from uninformed prejudice.

She has been accused, moreover, of being a snob. This is a touchy subject and one which in this country is liable to block discussion of a writer's possible merits. If it is snobbish to resist the common practice of grounding social distinctions on any single criterion, such as money or talent or antecedents, then paradoxically she is a snob. But a great deal of cant distinguishes our use of the term. At the worst, she merely substitutes her own brand of snobbishness for the prevalent American article; instead of establishing the bank statement as the criterion, she discriminates on the basis of manners, sensibility, and character.

Recent criticism has perhaps avoided her for still another reason: the paucity of biographical information. This would not be a deterrent except for the well-established suspicion that her fiction is intensely personal in the manner, if not to the degree, of Thomas Wolfe's or the recent Hemingway's. We know little more about her life than she was willing to tell us in *A Backward Glance*, a book as interesting for what it leaves out as for what it includes, or than we can gather from Percy Lubbock's brilliantly supplementary *Portrait of Edith Wharton*. Both of these memoirs are as indispensable as they are charming, but both leave the reader with the feeling that, for reasons he perhaps can appreciate, he has been



drawn only slightly into the confidence of the authors. They are full of tantalizing "faint clues and indirections," and they are remarkable finally, not as biography, but as valedictories to a period, a way of life, a particular circle of friends. They raise almost as many questions as they answer, and they are questions which may or may not be satisfied when Mrs. Wharton's papers, now in the Yale Library, are made available in 1969. Until then, the critic will have to rely heavily on the two books I have mentioned, expanding their suggestions as far as he dares without falling into unwarranted speculation. Although there are other, fleeting glimpses of Mrs. Wharton's career to be obtained from the memoirs and letters of her friends, such as Bernard Berenson, Mrs. Winthrop Chanler, Logan Pearsall Smith, and Henry James, they merely substantiate, without adding to, the impression we have from Mr. Lubbock's book.

This conspiracy of silence would be discouraging were it not that Edith Wharton seems to have been indebted to real-life persons and situations only in the limited and refined sense that all genuinely imaginative artists are. The modern American novel, especially since the heyday of naturalism, has been so overwhelmingly devoted to the *roman à clef* that it is difficult to credit the exception, but Mrs. Wharton appears to be one. I have been assured, by Mr. Lubbock and others, that her life, apart from its general significance and that of the background against which it unrolled, is not essential to an understanding of her fiction. Her extraordinarily fertile imagination not only presented her with more suggestions than she could use, but, like that of Henry James, it was able without the aid of actual characters or episodes to develop the germ of an idea into a fully realized situation.

It would, however, be unreasonable to assume that Mrs. Wharton's themes and the particular treatment they received under her hand were not determined or at least modified by her experience. We have, particularly in her autobiography, in Mr. Lubbock's portrait, and in Henry James's letters, the suggestion (it is seldom more than that) of certain difficult episodes in her life which seem to be shadowed forth in her fiction. It is impossible to note the reappear-

ance in her novels of certain situations, problems, and character types without speculating on their common significance. Generally, and in a way I will shortly try to define, her novels deal with the trapped sensibility. One is tempted to trace the motive for her preoccupation with this theme to her confessedly unsatisfactory relationship with Edward Wharton—a relationship which, so far as we can gather, had become critically strained by the time she wrote *The Fruit of the Tree* (1907). But the fact that the theme persists in her fiction long after their divorce suggests that her interest in it was fed from still another source. Mrs. Wharton's future biographer, encouraged by certain remarks in Mr. Lubbock's book, may depend on the at present shadowy figure of Walter Berry to furnish the explanation. Lubbock has described the latter as a man, "I am ready to believe, of strong intelligence and ability—but also, I certainly know, of a dry and narrow supercilious temper," and has spoken of the disastrous influence of his rationalism on Edith Wharton's creative life. Dogmatist, egotist, and snob though he seems to have been (and there has been some objection to Mr. Lubbock's estimate), there is no question of Edith Wharton's devotion to him—no doubt, even on the basis of her own cautious testimony in *A Backward Glance*, that for over forty years he made himself felt through the medium of her fiction. It is difficult to believe, moreover, that she could remain determinedly unaware of her friends' view of the relationship and that her novels do not reflect her own troubled probing of its various aspects. Those who have discerned the lineaments of Walter Berry's personality in a succession of Edith Wharton's heroes would probably agree that his relationship with the novelist is also reflected in the nature and treatment of the moral problems in her stories.

## II

With due respect for the objections to Mrs. Wharton's view of life that I have so conscientiously rehearsed, there are at least three reasons why she should have a permanent claim on our attention. It is largely of accidental significance that she is the only American

novelist who has dealt successfully and at length with that feudal remainder in New York society which hardly survived the beginning of the present century. More important is the fact that in chronicling the twilight of her race, she made the most of her opportunity to enforce a contrast between the old culture and the new, to illuminate, as no other novelist of her generation was able to do, a major aspect of our social history through the dramatic conflict between the ideals of the old mercantile and the new industrial societies.

In the second place, she is, next to Henry James, our most successful novelist of manners—not an extravagant claim in view of the limited competition in what to Americans seems to be an alien and difficult genre. It is impossible to develop the topic here as it should be developed, but it must be apparent to Mrs. Wharton's readers that the view of reality in her novels emerges characteristically through a sharp differentiation of appearances, that it is embodied in names, in the inflexions of speech, in details of costume and decor, in the countless means by which any fairly homogeneous group within a culture expresses its separateness. For this reason, she sought like Henry James to locate her subject in the rich ground offered by a traditional society—that of old New York or of the Faubourg St. Germain, with their consciously developed systems of manners—rather than in the more representative hinterlands of American society. *The Age of Innocence* is her triumph in this genre, but *The House of Mirth*, *The Custom of the Country*, and *The Reef* are not far behind.

Finally, she overcomes what has seemed to many critics to be the narrowing influence of her subject matter by her exploitation of two great and interlocking themes. Both appear in her earliest work, but neither is prominent until after the publication, in 1905, of her first great success, *The House of Mirth*. From this point on, all of her novels and the best of her novelettes—*Ethan Frome*, *The Bunner Sisters*, and *The Old Maid*—derive their chief interest from her attempt to come to grips with two complex and basically unresolvable themes. The first is provided by the spectacle of a large and generous nature—that of an Ethan Frome, an Eliza Bunner, an



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Anna Leath, or a Ralph Marvell—trapped by circumstances ironically of its own devising into consanguinity with a meaner nature—that of a Zeena Frome, an Evelina Bunner, a George Darrow, or an Undine Spragg. There is no accounting for such disastrous unions except as a result of the generous but misguided impulses of the larger nature; there is no justifying their waste of human resources. Moreover, there is no evading the responsibilities they entail, and this acknowledgment, inevitable to one of Edith Wharton's instincts and training, opens the way for her second theme. Given the general situation I have described, the novelist next tries to define the nature and limits of individual responsibility, to determine what allowance of freedom or rebellion can be made for her trapped protagonist without at the same time threatening the structure of society. Both themes are as familiar as they are inexhaustible. The opportunities they provide are mainly for the novelists in what F. R. Leavis calls "the great tradition," for whom the drama of life unfolds itself pre-eminently in moral terms. The first theme, particularly, is inescapable in the novels of two members of this company with whom Edith Wharton is closely allied in craftsmanship and sensibility but who surpassed her in intellectual force: George Eliot and Henry James.

Because of this kinship, it is possible that the large public revival of interest in Henry James has prepared the ground for a reappraisal of Mrs. Wharton. She is generally thought of as a disciple of the master; and although she is much more than that, the half-truth may serve a purpose in redirecting attention, by way of what is valuable in James, to what is valuable in Edith Wharton. Almost alone among American novelists in the early years of the century, they helped preserve the artistic dignity of the novel, and there is a significant parallel in their origins, background, and the way they viewed their world. But Edith Wharton made it clear in her novels, and more explicitly in *A Backward Glance*, that she was unable to follow James in his later development, so that his technical influence is confined for the most part to her earliest short stories and that most Jamesian of her novels, *The Reef* (1912). If Q. D. Leavis is stretching a point in claiming that "the American novel



grew up with Henry James and achieved a tradition with Edith Wharton," it is just as absurd to think of Mrs. Wharton simply as a poor-man's Henry James.

Her achievement can stand by itself. If we can be persuaded to read her with a portion of the sympathy and tolerance we reserve for such writers as Mark Twain and Theodore Dreiser, who embrace a more native tradition, her value will be apparent. The first notion we will have to scrap is that she spoke for a small, privileged group in society which was intent upon reinforcing the moribund claims of the past. There is nothing she scorned more than the pretensions of wealth or birth when they were unsupported by qualities of character, intellect, and sensibility. Much as she admired the society of the *ancien régime* in France, her sarcasm, according to Mr. Lubbock, was never vented more freely "than on the claims and assumptions of that same old honourable tradition, when it is not the past that rules it with a living spirit, but convention with a dead hand." It was her misfortune, perhaps, to maintain her transatlantic orientation at a time when American writers were most strenuously asserting their independence. Her social ideal is best expressed, not in the New York society of her youth, but, as she implied in *French Ways and Their Meaning* and later in *A Backward Glance*, in the pre-World War I Paris salon. "Culture in France," she once wrote, "is an eminently social quality." In the salon, where the leading artists, writers, statesmen, and educators of the time met to exchange ideas and where men and women mingled on a plane of perfect social and intellectual equality, those forces which worked for the preservation of culture—tradition, continuity, taste, and intellectual honesty, as Mrs. Wharton defined them—co-operated with the social instinct to produce a general expansion of the individual. From the vantage point of this ideal, Edith Wharton spoke for Western culture as a whole—for those elements in it which, over a period of centuries, had asserted their right to survival because they answered a proved social, moral, or aesthetic need. At a time when that culture is everywhere threatened, its values are nowhere better reaffirmed than in her novels.

# COCA CHEWING IN THE ANDES

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by C. Langdon White

EVERY traveler into the high Andes of Peru and Bolivia is impressed by the widespread use of coca\* among the Indians. So general is this use that, in Quechua, the word for coca is *cuka*, meaning *the tree*. The dried oval coca leaves are chewed by almost every adult male and by a majority of adult females. The habit is more universal, even, than that of tobacco smoking in the United States. No mountain man is seen without his coca bag and pouch of lime or ashes. In fact, no mountain Indian will work or travel without his ration of coca. His affection for the leaf is well expressed by *Ciro Alegría*, eminent Peruvian novelist and champion of the Indian's cause:

Coca . . . of the sweet pungent taste . . . good for hunger, for weariness, for cold, for heat, for joy, for everything . . . with coca the sick get well, with coca in their hands the dead depart this life . . . coca is wise and good.

A brief word picture of the land where coca is chewed and of the people who chew it is worth while, for it is only with a knowledge of their environment that one can really understand why the Indians depend on coca as they do.

The bulk of the coca grown in South America is consumed in Andean Peru and Bolivia. This backbone region, lying at elevations of 9,000 to 12,000 feet and frequently at 14,000 or 15,000 feet, consists of endless tumbled ranges of mountains, including cold deserts, semideserts, grasslands, and even some warm inter-Andean valleys. In Peru the term "sierra" is everywhere used to include the entire mountain region. In Bolivia, the principal habitable area is the so-called Altiplano—a lofty tableland, whose surface is strik-

\* The words *coca*, *coco*, and *cocoa* are often confused. The leaves of the coca bush are the ones chewed by the Indians of the Andes. The coco palm produces the hard-shelled coconut. Cocoa is the powder prepared from the cocoa bean. Practically no coca chewing occurs among the modern Quechua-speaking Indians of the Ecuadorean sierra.

ingly level. The northern part of the region receives adequate rainfall for agriculture, but the southern part is virtually desert.

The high elevation is responsible for the penetrating cold, despite the region's location within the "tropics." Winter is cold and bleak, and even summer is continuously cool in the shade. The cold is relieved only for a few hours a day by the sun. There are great extremes of temperature from day to night and from sun to shade. No part of the region is entirely free from frost during any part of the year. After his arrival in this former homeland of the Incas, James Bryce wrote that he now understood why the Incas were sunworshippers.

It is in this forbidding area that the Indians of our study live; it is one of the toughest milieus in the world for human beings. It is difficult to grow crops on the cold, stony land; it is hard to find fuel of any kind to cook with or keep warm by. Yet more than one-half of Peru's, and three-fourths of Bolivia's inhabitants live in this mountain region. The Indians who live there, however, have become adjusted to the cold, the thin air, and the niggardly resources. Dr. Carlos Monge of the Peruvian National Institute of Andean Biology regards the mountain Indian as "a distinct climatological variety of the human race . . . whose biological characteristics are distinct from those of sea-level man."

In physical structure, the differences are easy to see. The Indian has a barrel-like chest with huge chest expansion. His lungs are bigger than those of lowlanders, they contain more blood vessels, and they can do 12 percent more work. His heart is long and thick, beats slowly, and can perform 20 percent more work than the heart of a lowlander. His blood is in greater volume and contains more oxygen per unit. He carries about two quarts more blood than the lowlander and has a high-level red-cell count.

These Indians are engaged mostly in farming and stock raising. Some work in the mines. By and large, they are a world apart: they are on a subsistence basis, selling little and buying little. In the main, they subsist in wretchedness on a no-money economy. Hunger is a constant enemy; disease, nutritional deficiencies, and inadequate housing characterize the whole sierra.



## COCA CHEWING IN THE ANDES

It is these Indians who chew coca. But they do not grow it, for "the divine plant of the Incas," which requires both warmth and moisture, thrives only in the warm valleys on the eastern slopes of the Andes at altitudes between 3,000 and 6,000 feet. Also, it does best when protected from the tropical sun by a cloud shield.

The coca plant is a branching shrub that reaches a height of twelve to fifteen feet if left alone by man. Usually, under cultivation, it is pruned to six or eight feet as a means of facilitating harvesting of the leaves. The plant has small hollylike white flowers, red berrylike fruits, and oval gray-green leaves an inch or two in length. There are about two hundred species, but two supply the bulk of the leaves used by the Indians.

Coca is grown mostly on small plantations known as *cocales*. Since the bulk of the crop is consumed by the mountain Indians, these *cocales* are located as near as climate will permit to the consumer markets—every village and city in the sierra and Altiplano. The life of a *cocale* is from twenty years in the warmer portions of the coca belt to forty in the cooler. There are three harvests a year—in March, June, and October and November. The yield per plant averages about four ounces of leaves, and that per acre, 1,500 pounds. Women, along with children, do the picking, stripping the leaves from the branches into aprons or ponchos and then into large sacks. After drying in a drying shed, the leaves are allowed to sweat for several days. They are then dried in the sun and shipped in sacks, bales, and baskets up into the sierra. When shipped, the coca-filled containers weigh about twenty-five pounds. Four of these are taken on the back of a mule over perilous trails from the low-lying eastern territory to higher elevations where the mule is replaced by the llama. Few llamas are used or seen below 12,000 feet. Coca brings about \$3.30 (U.S.) a bundle. The market, like that for tobacco in the United States, is steady.

Probably the first question asked by the visitor to the sierra and Altiplano is, why do the Indians chew coca? The answer has five parts:

First, coca numbs their senses to the cold. This is important in



## C. LANGDON WHITE

a land largely devoid of fuel—coal, petroleum, natural gas, even wood. About the only fuel is the dung of the llama and the alpaca, and certain small resinous bushes.

Second, coca helps to stave off and even to prevent mountain sickness or *soroche*, which is characterized by nausea, panting, exhaustion, and splitting headache.

Third, coca erases all feeling of hunger and thirst. The Andean Indian—Quechua and Aymara—not only can travel without food, but, if chewing coca, will lose all consciousness of the need to eat.

Fourth, coca eliminates fatigue. When chewing it, the Indian is so stimulated that he can do incredible things. Coca-chewing miners sometimes work as many as twenty hours a day over a period of weeks or even months and with very little food. There is a saying throughout the Andes that one can mine without water, machinery, or dynamite—but not without coca. An Indian carrying a load of eighty to one hundred pounds climbs a mountain “straight on,” travels twenty to forty miles, often with nothing to eat, and apparently does not suffer if he has his coca.

Fifth, coca serves as the Indian’s companion in misery—helping to support “the pitiless reality of his drab existence.” Coca fortifies him, supplying an impenetrable stoicism.

Thus coca is an integral part of the way of life in the high Andes. It seals all Indian pacts; it is the sacrament of his fiestas, the sanctifier of his weddings, the consolation of his sorrows, the companion of his joys.\* Over generations, his nervous system has become adjusted to it. He could not endure his miserable life with its unbelievable hardships without some such consolation.

Coca has a long history in the Andes. It was used before Incan times. Bundles of leaves, woolen bags containing leaves, gourds containing lime and ash, and spatulas have been excavated from graves in coastal Peru. Portrait vases, known as *huacos*, depicting the chewing of coca have also been found.

The Incas also used coca, but its use was not as universal as now; they restricted it to the nobility, to principal religious ceremonies,

\* L. W. Hughes, “The Curse of Coca,” *Inter-American Monthly*, V (September 1946), 18–22.

## COCA CHEWING IN THE ANDES

to periods of constructing their incomparable engineering works (probably they could not have erected their temples and fortresses of mammoth stones from distant quarries without coca), and to military campaigns. The use was thus subject to strict regulation under the Incan government.

After the Conquest, the Spaniards enlarged the coca plantations, and the use of the leaf spread to all classes of society. This occurred despite the fact that the Crown issued from time to time edicts against its use. Thus from 1555 to 1561, Viceroy Cañete attempted to suppress the use of coca by the Indians at its very source—cultivation. He did this because the Spaniards were finding coca to be a highly profitable crop, and its expansion was drawing labor away from the mines. Since, however, the Indian was the sole worker not only in the *cocales* but in the mines and fields of the sierra and Altiplano, and since he would not work without his ration of coca, legislative efforts were soon abandoned. Francisco de Toledo, the fifth Viceroy, issued some seventy ordinances concerning coca, but he was no more successful than Cañete. The Church also interested itself in suppressing coca, but it, too, made little or no headway.

Today, as already said, coca chewing is universal throughout the Peruvian and Bolivian Andes, and so long as food, shelter, health, clothing, and fuel remain as bad as they now are, coca will continue to be used.

The coca addict carries a *chuapa*, or pouch, for his dried leaves (it is almost always beautifully woven and colorfully designed); a *popoko*, or small ornamented gourd, in which he carries the *llipta* or limy substances needed; and a little stick for transferring the *llipta* to the mouth.

The leaves are placed in the mouth first; lime or ash is not added until the leaves are so moistened as to be worked into a quid about the size of a walnut. South of Cerro de Pasco, the ash is made from burned quinoa stems; north of Cerro de Pasco, the limy substance is derived from calcined snail or other shells. The purpose of using lime or ash is to liberate the alkaloids in the leaves. The chewer swallows the juice. Ordinarily, from four to six chews are taken in one day.

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As a visitor notices the widespread use of coca throughout the region, he cannot fail to be interested in its physiological effect on the Indian. Is he a dope fiend? Is coca responsible for the dullness, the apathy, the stolidity, the lack of imagination, the weakness of will, the apparent sadness, and the indolence so commonly associated with the Quechua and particularly the Aymara? Probably, it is not. The amount of cocaine liberated from a quid is so small that its effect dulls the senses only slightly. Medical science has not yet studied sufficiently the effects of coca chewing upon the individual to allow for a positive answer. It is extremely difficult to isolate the effects of coca from those of malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, and centuries of serfdom or semiserfdom.

A famous laboratory in the United States has analyzed coca and has found that it is an important source of vitamins. Some doctors claim that coca is being blamed for the idleness and apparent degeneracy of many mountain Indians when malaria is really the cause—malaria contracted on the journeys the men make to the coastal region for salt and into the Montaña for coca and tropical fruit. Nonetheless, coca chewing undoubtedly results in some physiological and psychological changes. Two Peruvian scientists insist that the chronic effect of coca chewing is a serious impairment of intelligence, memory, and personality.\* Another writer, however, declares that it would be as unjustifiable to claim that coca results in physiological and moral decay as to make a similar claim for use of tobacco, with its ingestion of nicotine, in the United States. We do not have, as yet, adequate scientific information.

As would be expected, efforts are made constantly by social workers and missionaries to prohibit production of and traffic in coca. But the time is not yet at hand for accomplishing this. The hard way of life must be taken into account. As a Bolivian official has pointed out:

Their [the Indian miners'] physiological impoverishment is aggravated by the excessive use of the coca leaf, a drug whose consumption cannot, unfortunately, be lessened as long as their work is not made more bearable and human, and an improvement made in their diet.

\* Carlos Gutierrez-Noriega y Vicente Zapata Ortiz, *Estudios Sobre la Coca y la Cocaína en el Perú*, Lima, 1947.



## COCA CHEWING IN THE ANDES

Moreover, the economy of much of the area on the east slope of the Andes depends upon coca; it is the major agricultural enterprise and one of the few products capable of standing the heavy expense of transport to market. Its high price enables it to hurdle the mountain barrier. Indeed, the economy in the whole sierra depends in no small measure on coca. It is believed that eight to ten million people chew it—mostly Indians, but also some mestizos and whites. “A wad of dried coca leaves bulges the cheek of every altiplano Indian . . . and helps him to forget that perhaps no other man has a harder life.”\*

A work day on a piece of agricultural land at plowing time illustrates clearly the indispensability of his stimulant to the mountain Indian. The work day begins at dawn when the men meet at the plot. Sitting on the ground, the party chews some coca supplied by the owner of the plot. Work begins a little later, and is interrupted after an hour for another round of coca. Work is then continued without interruption until noon. After lunch, more coca is chewed. At about two o'clock, after another hour's work, the group once more partakes of the host's coca. The work day ends about five o'clock when the men return to their homes.

Coca is procurable almost anywhere — in stores of hamlets, villages, and towns. It is purchased especially in the Indian markets, where the coca section is usually the center of greatest activity. Here, bales of coca leaves are sold, the amount of a given sale varying from a handful to an arroba. Both the Bolivian and Peruvian governments impose taxes upon coca. Even some cities do. La Paz, for example, imposes a tax on every incoming and every outgoing basket or bale.

In the foregoing pages, the background of the coca problem has been presented. The Indian of the high Andes, like the buildings, terraces, and canals of his Inca forebears, is in ruins; and, by many, his pitiable condition is attributed to his addiction to coca. It is attributed by others, however, to the contempt and ill-treatment to which he fell a victim at the hands of the white man. Who can really

\* “Bolivia,” *Fortune*, January 1942, p. 75.



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say? Many problems related to coca chewing have as yet not been studied, and others have been studied only incompletely. There is still a rich field here for research—medical, social, psychological, and nutritional. Until, however, scientists have proved that coca chewing does have deleterious effects, it would be both useless and downright dangerous to attempt to deprive an entire mountain population of a product which has been used for centuries and to which the native's habit of life, as probably also his nervous system, is now attuned.

*"It is my opinion, Sancho, that there is no proverb that is not true; for they are all drawn from experience itself, mother of all the sciences, and especially that saying that runs, 'Where one door closes another opens.'"*

—CERVANTES, *Don Quixote*, Samuel Putnam's translation (New York: The Viking Press).

## *The Dean*

RICHARD ARMOUR

When he considers how his days are spent  
(More than professor, not quite president,  
Though toward the latter tentatively reaching),  
He wonders if he should have left his teaching.  
Of course—he rubs his high, impressive brow—  
He has a private secretary now  
And sits upon the platform in the spring,  
Crown prince and heir apparent, though not king.  
And while some whisper that it must be four,  
He really makes a good two thousand more,  
From what is called the administrative racket,  
Than any in the full professor bracket.

And yet, with summer just ahead, he dreams  
Of bygone days—how one month hardly seems  
A third of three for resting, going places.  
He sees the row on row of student faces,  
More cheerful than committeemen. You know,  
The Dean is always *ex officio*.  
He notices the dust that thickens on  
The box of three-by-fives. He has not gone  
Inside to add a note on Chaucer's -e,  
Last chapter of his book, since '33.

So he considers how his days are spent,  
More than professor, not quite president.

## THE AUTHORS

(Continued from page 131)

ture, 1950, at Mills College, California.

**WINDSOR C. CUTTING** ("Our Tiniest Adversaries") is chairman of the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the Stanford University Medical School, where he has been since 1938. An earlier article of his, "New Drugs and Drug Science," appeared in the Summer 1950 *Pacific Spectator*.

**CLINTON WILLIAMS** ("Epistle for My Father") is the author of "The Serious Business of Semper Took," which appeared in the Autumn 1949 *Pacific Spectator*. Mr. Williams' verse has been published in several of the general magazines and in many of those devoted principally to poetry. He is on the staff of San Jose State College in California.

**OSCAR OSBURN WINTHER** ("The Far West in Nonfiction at Mid-Century") is the author of *The Old Oregon Country: A History of Trade, Transportation, and Travel*, which was brought out by the Stanford University Press in 1950, but which Mr. Winther, perhaps understandably, has not included in his appraisal. It is the eighth volume to bear his signature, most of the eight concerning themselves with Western history. Mr. Winther is professor of history and acting dean of the Graduate School at Indiana University.

**GENE DAVIS** ("The Arctic Plain"), a native Californian, has prospected first for tin, then for oil, over a good part of the earth's surface. He is now

in Fairbanks, Alaska, as project manager for Arctic Contractors, "civilian contractors employed by the Navy to carry on exploration for oil by geological means and drilling of test wells in Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 on the north coastal slope of Alaska."

**LEWIS MUMFORD** ("Man as Interpreter") is the author of a long line of books and essays, has taught or lectured at half a dozen American universities. The present essay, his second in *The Pacific Spectator*, forms a section of *The Conduct of Life*, the book on which he is now at work.

**HELEN F. McDONALD** [Sister M. Stanislaus] ("Give Us This Day") says of herself: "At the age of fourteen, I left my native home, Helena, Montana, to become a Missionary Nun of the Ursuline Order. Over thirty years of convent experience was gained in living among seven Indian tribes of Montana on six reservations, and in the states of New York, Texas, Washington, Idaho, and California. . . . At present, owing to ill health, I have been given a temporary leave of absence . . . to live at home . . . The story, 'Give Us This Day,' is my first."

**W. GORDON GRAHAM** ("Communism and South Asia") defines himself as "Scotsman by parentage and sentiment, British by passport, world citizen by conviction." After five years in a Scottish infantry battalion in World War II, years which included the Burma campaign, Major Graham is now resident in Bombay.

## THE AUTHORS

He is special correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* and *McGraw-Hill World News*, and lives in South Asia because "it will soon be the most important part of the globe."

**AGNES BRACHER** ("Sonnet Out of Illness") is a newcomer to *The Pacific Spectator's* pages. She says of herself: "I was born in Norwich, England, which puts me in more illustrious literary company than I can live up to. . . . Biographical studies are really my forte. . . . I am the wife of a college professor." Mrs. Bracher's home is in Claremont, California, her present temporary residence in Monterey.

**BLAKE NEVIUS** ("Edith Wharton Today"), the author of "Steinbeck: One Aspect," which appeared in the Summer 1949 *Pacific Spectator*, is on the staff of the University of California at Los Angeles. His special interest is in American fiction. "Edith Wharton Today" is part of a critical study of Edith Wharton's fiction on which Mr. Nevius has been at work for several years.

**C. LANGDON WHITE** ("Coca Chewing in the Andes") spent 1947-48 as visiting professor of human geography at San Marcus University in Peru. Prior to those years he had made frequent visits to South America as conductor of field parties of students and teachers,

and in both capacities had traveled widely in the Andes. Mr. White is now professor of geography at Stanford University, where he has been since 1943.

**RICHARD ARMOUR** ("The Dean") is already well known to *Spectator* readers. His two earlier poems dealt with college faculties en masse. This time he turns to the individual official—"more than professor, less than president"—who is to be found meditating on his state somewhere on almost every campus. As said in an earlier biographical note, Mr. Armour is professor of English at Scripps College, California.

### EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 129)

or foreign issues as are here raised in "Challenge at Mid-Century." The possibility is, unhappily, not a remote one. It is near enough, foreboding enough, to give significance not only to such projects as *The Pacific Spectator* but also to the whole campaign of those scholars who, finally awake, are now trying to make clear to others their purposes and their accomplishment. Research alone, learning alone, cannot save us. Only learning interpreted can add strength to a democratic nation.

EDITH R. MIRRIELES





**T**HE editorial published in the first number of *The Pacific Spectator* was headed by a quotation: "Your knowledge is nothing unless another understands it." In the quarterly's five years of life its editors have had many occasions to recall the dictum, and never more often than when attempting to fulfill one of the *Spectator's* prime aims—that of strengthening the thin line of understanding which stretches from one to the other border of the Pacific.

It is a line over which interpretable messages must both come and go if understanding is to be served. Often it has seemed here that our attempts at communication were invariably misinterpreted—good will translated into self-seeking, optimism into callousness. We are the more glad, then, to publish in this issue one evidence to the contrary, evidence of the admirable effects, the high success, of Fulbright grants in the Philippines. To balance this, however, and to remind ourselves of the desperate strain existing among a defeated and all but ruined people, we add, without comment, a passage taken from a letter received in May from a Japanese writer:

. . . it may interest you to know that Japanese literary circles are perplexed as to what would be the proper attitude in the present strained international situation. The suicide of Jamiki Hara, a promising writer . . . is attributed to this widely felt anxiety.

*Edith R. Munniceles*

# THE PACIFIC

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## THE AUTHORS

**ALBERT LEON GUÉRARD** ("Descartes, or the Will to Doubt"), professor emeritus of general literature at Stanford University, has spent the last year as professor of general and comparative literature at Brandeis University and lecturer at the New School for Social Research in New York. He has recently completed a history of France, "France: the Biography of a Nation," and is now engaged on the third volume of a

trilogy, "Bottle in the Sea," which is the final volume of his biography. The two earlier volumes, *Personal Equation* and *Education of a Humanist*, were published in 1947 and 1949, respectively.

"Descartes, or the Will to Doubt" is Mr. Guérard's second contribution to *The Pacific Spectator*, "Gloria Victis! The Spirit of 'Forty-eight" having appeared in the Autumn 1948 issue.

**C. W. M. GELL** ("The Challenge of Communism in Asia"), Manxman by

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descent, Scot by birth, English by education, entered the Indian Civil Service in 1940. Through 1944-45 he served as Undersecretary to the Government of the Punjab, Political Department. Retired in 1947 because of illness, he now lives in South Africa.

Mr. Gell's articles have appeared in many British and South African periodicals. So far as the editors of *The Pacific Spectator* are informed, the present essay marks his first publication in the United States.

**JOHN R. FERRONE** ("About My Sons") has recently returned from travel and study in Italy. In the year before he went to Italy he held a fellowship in creative writing at Stanford University, and in the three years before that served with the Army Air Force in the Pacific.

"About My Sons" was one of the prize-winning stories in the 1951 short-story contest at Stanford University, where Mr. Ferrone is now enrolled.

(Continued on page 376)

by *Albert Leon Guérard*

**I**F LITERATURE were mere literature, the place of Descartes in that pleasant realm would be very small indeed, either as a performer or as an influence, and this essay might emulate the masterly brevity, praised by Dr. Johnson, of the chapter on snakes in *Iceland*.

Perhaps Descartes' chief service to pure literature is that he inspired La Fontaine's delightful discourse to Madame de la Sablière. Descartes believed that animals were mere automatons, although he would have rejected with horror La Mettrie's corollary: Man, too, is an animal, therefore he is a machine. La Fontaine loved animals. There is much unnatural history in his *Fables*, much that is conventional allegory, in the tradition of Aesop, Phaedrus, and the Romance of Renart: he maligned the cicada without any valid reason, and committed other heresies. But he was also a keen and sympathetic observer, and he rebelled against Descartes' rigid mechanism. Animals obviously have passions—an oyster, said Sheridan, may be crossed in love—and many of them have cunning as well. They meet new situations with appropriate devices, and how could they do so without taking thought? He pays to Descartes a tribute which is at the same time handsome and ironical: "Descartes, that mortal whom the pagans would have turned into a god, Descartes, halfway between mere man and pure spirit, just as some of our contemporaries are halfway between man and oyster . . ." His philosophy is "subtle, engaging, and bold." It is called "the new philosophy," and La Fontaine ingenuously asked the learned Madame de la Sablière: "Have you ever heard of it?" Now, the "new" philosophy was by that time some forty years old. Imagine a man asking a lady who prides herself on her culture, "Have you heard of those newfangled writers, Bergson and Freud?"

La Fontaine does not make a much better job of defining the soul of animals than the most profound philosophers of giving even an adumbration of the human soul: he piles up hints, images, ambigui-



# OR THE WILL TO DOUBT

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ties, in the most orthodox fashion. But he ends with a decisive illustration. Two rats have found an egg, and want to take it to their nest. Roll it they cannot, for it might break. So one rat turns on its back, and holds the egg between its four legs. The other pulls him by the tail. Rather rough on the carrier, but the scheme might work. And La Fontaine exclaims triumphantly: "Let any one tell me, after such a story, that animals have no mind!" The man from Missouri—say Mr. T. S. Eliot or President Truman—might say, "First show me your rats." Stanford University has produced psychological wonders out of white rats. But so far as I know, they have not confirmed La Fontaine's experiment.

No—Descartes has contributed little, directly or indirectly, to literature in the strictest sense of the term. He wrote his *Discourse on Method* in French. And we are told that this marked the emancipation of the vernacular, as all philosophical treatises had hitherto been written in Latin—strange that the classical age should thus have rebelled against the classical language par excellence! But we must not forget that nearly a century before, Calvin had translated his *Christian Institute* into French, and that there was much philosophy, in a very legitimate sense of the term, in Montaigne's *Essays*: "To philosophize is to learn how to die: *le savoir mourir* is the supreme achievement of *le savoir vivre*." As a literary artist, Descartes does not rank very high. There are a few crisp and telling sentences in the autobiographical parts of the *Discourse*. But on the whole, his style, if not leaden, is solid cast iron. Guez de Balzac, at the same moment, was attempting to give dignity and "number," that is to say, rhythm, to French prose, and was at times almost a French Cicero—no extravagant phrase, in my estimation. He wrote almost too well. If we are not satisfied with the algebra of thought, we must confess that Descartes, in French, does not write well enough: his Latin is perhaps more adequate. A few years later, Pascal and Bossuet were to prove that the most searching or the most cogent thought could be expressed in magnificent French. They be-

## DESCARTES, OR THE WILL TO DOUBT

long to literature, without any suspicion of would-be elegance or clever frivolity. In that sense, Descartes does not belong.

The problem changes altogether if, without poaching on the closely guarded preserves of technical philosophy and pure science, we study literature as one of the essential components of culture, inseparable from the others. Then we find that great books are those which wrestle with great problems, far more vital than mere technicalities, and that such books mirror the hope, the dread, the striving of many minds, of an age, of a nation, of humanity at large. In this deeper sense, all *sacred* books belong to literature, and the *Discourse on Method* belongs to the Bible of Mankind.

Consider a few dates. In 1635, the Academy, pre-existing as a club of gentlemen interested in good language, assumes formal existence, and is recognized as an authority. In 1636, Paris is swept with enthusiasm by Corneille's first masterpiece, *Le Cid*. The Hôtel de Rambouillet is attempting to enforce a code of good manners. Malherbe and Balzac have disciplined poetry and prose. And above all stands Richelieu, curbing feudal chaos with an iron hand. That is the *moment* when the *Discourse* appeared.

Evidently, Descartes' method neither was the cause of these parallel activities, nor was it caused by them. In every domain, we discover the same spirit. France, at the end of the sixteenth century, had shuddered on the brink of an abyss. The Renaissance, that magnificent release of human energy, had led to moral anarchy—the splendid ruffianism of a Cesare Borgia. The Reformation, at first a glorious hope like the Renaissance, then a sharp reaction against its paganism, had caused spiritual disruption and ferocious, most un-Christian wars. The long quarrel of the Guises and the Bourbons, under the cloak of religion, recalled the rivalry of Armagnacs and Bourguignons during the Hundred Years' War, itself a relapse into the brutal confusion of the Dark Ages. France had escaped, through the smiling, shrewd, persistent opportunism of Henry IV. But Henry, himself the product of a troublous time, skeptical at heart, a crowned Montaigne with a touch of kindly cynicism, offered only a temporary solution. Chaos was still menacing. It was the greatness of classical France that it refused to capitulate

to chaos. Twice at least, Germany, in the days of romanticism, and in the vulgarized romanticism of the Nazis, flung herself deliberately into the *Abgrund*, to escape moral responsibility, just as Pirandello's Henry IV sought refuge in madness; and that suicide was considered as a sign of profundity. France sought to evolve order out of that tragic welter. And the major victory in that great campaign for order was the *Discourse on Method*.

That victory was the triumph not of abstract intelligence, but of the heroic will. What impresses us with the men, and the women, of that age, is their indomitable courage—even the most obvious kind of bodily courage; it is the age of the Musketeers and Cyrano de Bergerac, whose wit was as keen as their rapiers. There is a touch of willful braggadocio about them, if you like, as there is about Corneille, their contemporary. The great Cardinal-Duke himself did not merely have the mustache and goatee of a cavalier: he appeared, booted and cuirassed, before the ramparts of La Rochelle. This element exists in our hero of abstract thought, Descartes. At twenty-five, in West Frisia, threatened by a scoundrelly crew of ferrymen, he held them in respect at the point of the sword. A few years later, he fought a duel with a rival, under the eyes of the lady they were seeking to win. It is curious, but not absurd, that young Descartes should have selected, not the cloister or the study, but the army, and that for years he should have been a gentleman-adventurer, like Cyrano himself. Military life did not stifle philosophy. Perhaps because military life refuses to acknowledge thought altogether, "Theirs not to reason why," and, ignoring it, leaves it free. A businessman, a minister, a doctor, a teacher have to think of many things; a soldier does not have to think at all. In the case of Descartes, as in that of Alfred de Vigny, freedom *from* thought led to freedom *of* thought.

I insist that the first step in the growth of Descartes' philosophy was an act of the will, not of reflection. Reflection is the fruit, not the seed. His whole philosophy is guided by one of the rules of his provisional code of action: decide, at random if need be, and go right ahead; for if you are lost in a forest, it is better to go the longest and hardest way out, if it be consistently pursued, than to stand still,



## DESCARTES, OR THE WILL TO DOUBT

run in circles, or attempt twenty paths only to abandon them after a few steps. Descartes is thus the exact opposite of Hamlet—perhaps not Shakespeare's Hamlet, who like Shakespeare himself remains an enigma, but the Hamlet that Goethe and Coleridge have imposed upon the world.

Think your way through. No one can think for you. And thinking must start with a decision. Strictly, Descartes should have said: I will, therefore I am. For his doubt was not a datum of experience; he made himself doubt, and he made himself think his way out of his doubt. In this, his attitude is purely Cornelian. It is a commonplace that the great characters in Corneille are not the servants of duty, but the heroes — splendidly sinister at times — of inflexible will. This is manifest in Corneille's earliest tragedy, still stiff and bombastic like a Senecan drama, *Medea*: the self-reliance of the individual soul, deprived of all earthly support:

Your country hates you, your husband is faithless:  
In such dire need, what remains to you?

Myself.

Myself, alone, and that suffices.

"Myself, alone, and that suffices": it is the same movement by which Descartes sweeps aside all reassuring authorities, institutions, traditions, and even the senses, which may be a mystification played upon us by a deity with a perverse sense of humor. In this total devastation of the intellectual universe, "what remains to you? Myself." "Never to accept a thing as true, unless it appears *to me* clearly and evidently to be such." At this stage, Descartes' attitude is not merely the subjectivism, the egocentricity, of the romanticists: it is pure solipsism. His own existence alone is a fact; the rest of the world he spins out of his own reason, and the evidence for it is only at second hand.

Such, evidently, is the attitude of all the great heroes of thought, rebels, prophets, and founders: they speak directly, as having authority, and not like the scribes. It is the attitude of Joan of Arc, refusing to submit the validity of her visions to the verdict of the Church; the attitude of Luther at the Diet of Worms: "So help me God, I cannot otherwise!" Perhaps heroism consists in becoming, through a



tremendous act of will, as transparently candid as a little child. In Hans Christian Andersen's tale, "The Emperor's New Clothes," all the clever ones, the courtiers, the monarch himself, dare not trust their senses against a ubiquitous convention. It takes a child—or a Descartes—to exclaim, "But the Emperor has no clothes on at all!"

That sweeping aside of all established fences is Descartes' systematic doubt, the core of his method, and the lesson we need more imperiously than ever today. Tennyson said, with his Victorian middle-road wisdom — wish we could recover it! — "There lives more faith in honest doubt,/Believe me, than in half the creeds." Had he gone further, he would have rejoined Descartes and said, "No faith is valid, unless it has passed through the crucible of doubt." Prove—that is to say, try or test—all things. God has no need of our delusions or our lies. If they be delusions or lies, they are obstacles and not guides in our path. I am fond of quoting the experience of Don Quixote, equipping himself for his chivalrous quest. He made a helmet out of pasteboard, and smashed it with his sword. Then, nothing daunted, he made a second one, likewise out of pasteboard, and prudently refrained from putting it to the test. That was why he was Don Quixote, the great delusionist. He refused to doubt, when doubt would have been sanity. Note that it is said, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief." Not dispel, not destroy, but help, that is, guide, sustain mine unbelief, because unbelief is the only safe path toward the light. Many nineteenth-century writers have wailed, and at times whined, over the doubt, a corrosive force destroying the integrity of their thought and life. Amiel's *Journal* is an interminable dirge over his shattered faith. Nothing of the kind in Descartes. His doubt is triumphant, even before it has reached the goal. For he has faith in his own doubt, that is to say, in himself.

It must be plain that there are at least three great forms of doubt in French literature, and that their intellectual content, their spiritual resonance, are different. The first is Montaigne's. It is not the very foundation of his thought, for he was a stoic at heart. But in an age rent asunder by rival fanaticisms, doubt was the one path of return to sanity. So Montaigne revels in his doubt: his *Apology for*

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*Raymond de Sebonde* is a spirited, almost an exulting catalogue of all the diversities, conflicts, absurdities of human opinions. "Doubt is a soft pillow for a well-made head." But that doubt only appears to be an end in itself. The lesson, most pressing in Montaigne's days, as it is in our own, was: "Do not take your opinions with such tragic earnestness as to be ready, for their sake, to roast your fellow men alive." Today, we yearn to tell the clashing doctrinaires, fiercely girding themselves for an inevitable world conflict: "Jonah, Jonah, dost thou well to be angry?" There is deep seriousness in Montaigne, but at the exact point where it is focused for us, his skepticism is inseparable from a smile and a shrug: "What do I know? And, moreover, what do I care?" It is the amiable, tolerant scepticism of *The Book of Jonah* and its modern version, *The Vision of Babouc*, of Renan in his last phase, and of Renan's disciple Jérôme Coignard. Within its field, it is not to be despised. But there is nothing of the kind in Descartes. He is no jesting Pilate. His "*Que sais-je?*" is uttered in a different tone.

There is a third and a greater doubt, which is not self-willed like Descartes', and not self-satisfied like Montaigne's. It is that of Pascal. It is the doubt that is inseparable from anguish: the torment of a noble soul. Pascal seeks with groaning—*Chercher en gémissant*—as Descartes seeks with confidence and quiet joy. For Pascal, doubt is not the indispensable and trusted instrument, but the enemy. Perhaps he was closer to Descartes than he was ready to confess: he had not integrated doubt as a necessary process in his faith, but he was too superbly honest to discard doubt. At times, he almost despaired, accepted an opiate: "Practise, it will stupefy you, alleviate the malady of thought." But his central argument is Cartesian: in the dark forest, choose your path, and follow it consistently. That choice, not necessarily reasonable, perhaps above reason, perhaps below, is what he calls his *wager*: "*Les jeux sont faits; rien ne va plus.*"

In Descartes, there is no smile, and no anguish: a deep gravity, which is the sign of a profound joy. By doubting, he becomes more purely himself—he rises above prejudices and passions, he is conscious of his very essence. Elliptically: "I doubt, therefore I

am." This reaching unafraid to the very bedrock of his thought is an act of daring unexampled in its purity, but, I repeat, in harmony with the spirit of the time. Descartes is a Nicomède deriding even the overwhelming might of Rome. He achieves quietly, without bluster, what Pascal was to express so much better, in the noblest passage in all French literature: "Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature; but he is a thinking reed . . . Greater than the material universe that crushes him, because he knows he is crushed." No Titanic or Byronic defiance: a calm assurance of spiritual dignity.

In Voltaire, there was a blend of Montaigne and Descartes; the Pascal element was lacking. We find the same Cartesian-Cornelian courage in Alfred de Vigny, but this time with a dark inner glow which reminds us of Pascal. As Descartes undertook the great voyage to the end of the night, so did Vigny; but it was the moral night, not that of the intellect. He rejected all conventional comforts. He found no joy in Nature, in the love of Delilah, in God himself: all are equally implacable. To groan, to weep, to pray, are equal in cowardice. But Vigny does not, like Schopenhauer or Leconte de Lisle, rejoice in his pessimism. He, too, reaches bedrock; like Descartes, like Pascal, he finds his strength and his dignity in consciousness, in thought. He will not yield to the Dark Forces: he fights his way through them into the light. Suffering is ennobling; and the key to salvation is active pity, not for one's self, but for one's fellow sufferers. Thus, all idols swept aside, he closes with a hymn to the Pure Spirit, the God of Ideas, that is, to the God of Descartes.

We find the same movement again in the modern French Existentialists—perish the word and its pedantry! They face the fact, which Descartes had not reached, that this world does not obey the norms of human reason. Humanly speaking, the world is absurd. It is indifferent, and it is the merest pathetic fallacy for us to curse it as hostile. But, by calling it absurd, we affirm a verity which stands apart from, and above, the chaos of the apparent universe. The man who thinks creates a little zone of light and order in the cosmic murk. That conviction is in Sartre and more lucidly in Camus, as it was in Descartes, Pascal, Vigny. That is why they did not capitulate,



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as Céline may have done, to the forces of nihilism. They found in themselves, and in themselves alone, the power to resist. And their resistance was no blind instinct, like the rage of an animal caught in a trap: it was reasonable. What they were defending against the absurd was the dignity of thought, which is the whole dignity of man.

This, to my mind, is the essential Descartes. It is not the whole of his rich personality. No man is an incarnated theorem, or a pure act of will. Our supreme logician was of contradictions all compact. I have presented him as a hero of thought: he had, in abundance, his cautious streaks. In his provisional code, he decided to follow scrupulously the customs, the laws, the faith of his age and country. Above all, he wanted no quarrel with the Church; and to that effect, he took precautions which Bossuet himself was to declare excessive. But that was sixty years after the event; when Descartes wrote, the Galileo case was fresh in people's minds. Descartes was heroic—but stopped short of courting martyrdom. After all, why expose one's self to indignities and even death, to maintain that the earth is moving, that the blood flows, that the world is more than six thousand years old? What Descartes wanted to save was the Method, which would inevitably lead to the truth: any particular truth could well take care of itself. A Victor Hugo, fond of flamboyant attitudes, could say, "If only one be left to resist, I shall be that one"; we feel that Descartes, and Goethe too, would have signed any oath required of them, perhaps with an inward smile or an imperceptible shrug. In this, Descartes was truly a French classic: for if the key word of classicism was *la raison*, it meant reasonableness rather than pure reasoning.

So the great advocate of free thought was curiously conservative in his beliefs. Not entirely out of prudence. Before you challenge a prejudice, you have to recognize it as possibly a prejudice. Now a prejudice and an axiom are both unquestioned affirmations; and "unquestioned" is easily made synonymous with "unquestionable": a preconception appears a self-evident truth. Descartes, for instance, took for granted the notion of absolute perfection; and he drew from that axiom the consequence that perfection implied exist-



ence—the famous ontological argument. He had not anticipated Paul Valéry's profound, perhaps Buddhistic conception,

Que l'existence est un défaut  
Dans la perfection du non-être,

that existence is but a flaw in the perfection of nonbeing. Pascal was to write, "They say habit is a second nature: what if nature were but a first habit?" So Descartes accepted certain concepts as primitive, immediate data of consciousness, when we believe that they are merely traditional. He probed his own thought to its utmost depth, but only in a direct line; there was much that he left unexplored.

There is a sharp contrast between Descartes' heroism and his prudence. There is an even sharper one between his solipsism, "Myself, alone, and that suffices!" and his appeal to, his reliance upon, common opinion. If he rejects all special authorities, however impressive and hoary, he accepts, he exalts, the authority of the average man. He is fighting the self-styled experts, the supercilious initiates, the pedants entrenched in their fortress of formalized prejudices: so did Socrates, so did Jesus. He writes, in heavy but lucid nontechnical French, for the layman, if not quite for the man in the street. He was the first of the popularizers—*vulgarisateurs* in the strictly French sense: a distinguished line, and particularly Gallic, in which Pascal, Fontenelle, Voltaire, Renan, were to follow him. He went so far as to include in his potential public "even women," for the elaborate gallantry of the age had not yet broken down the prejudice against feminine brains, "snakes in Iceland." It is odd to think of the austere logician, mathematician, and physicist as a professor for society ladies, yet he had among his disciples Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia and Queen Christina of Sweden. We might consider him as a forerunner of Trissotin in Molière's *Learned Ladies*; most decidedly of Fontenelle, whose *Chats on the Plurality of Inhabited Worlds* are masterpieces of drawing-room wit and courtesy; of Voltaire, who wrote his *Universal History* for Madame du Châtelet; of Bellac in Pailleron's *Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie*, the pedant as society pet, a composite picture of many successful academic lecturers; even of Bergson, whose courses at the

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Collège de France were thronged with the aristocracy of birth and wealth. He was a remote ancestor of Madame de Staël, who asked German philosophers to expound their systems in ten minutes. When they answered in consternation that it was impossible, she flashed back, "Anything I cannot understand in ten minutes is not worth understanding"—Cartesianism carried to the verge of the absurd.

Descartes' rejection of historical authority has been made responsible for the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns—but Molière needed no Cartesian schooling to declare, "The ancients are the ancients, and we are the people of today." The Age of Reason, the Enlightenment, is heavily indebted to him, although Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Diderot owed even more to the English tradition. He might be made responsible for the faith, crude rather than absurd, in all-conquering science, yet his wildest dreams, the possibility of an intelligent language superior to all the historical ones, the control of disease, the indefinite extension of the span of life, strike us now as bold anticipations rather than sheer utopias.

Most of all, he was responsible, through his appeal to common sense, for democracy in the fallacious but indestructible use of the term: the quaint idea that George F. Babbitt's opinion on relativity is as good as Einstein's, "and probably a darn sight better"; the conviction that a majority could validly declare that the earth is flat. Democracy has an ideal sense: equal opportunities for all, the removal of all hampering privileges. It has a pragmatic sense as well, and a very legitimate one: democracy means a bloodless civil war, not more convincing than any other war, but in which heads are counted rather than broken, and ballots are used instead of bullets. But Cartesianism would seem to justify the Rousseauistic fallacy: *Vox populi, vox Dei*.

Against these exaggerations and deformations, it was proper that many intellects should rebel, even when their debt to Descartes was manifest. Voltaire was a pragmatist rather than a pure Cartesian. Rousseau, and with him all the romanticists, affirmed the primacy of the heart: "I feel, therefore I am." Vico, Herder, Burke, and ultimately Darwin emphasized against him the concept of obscure, organic, nonrational growth. And in spite of all the precautions

## ALBERT LEON GUÉRARD

noted by Bossuet, he was attacked in our century, directly and by implication, by most Catholic writers—Léon Bloy, Charles Péguy, Paul Claudel, Jacques Maritain. It is the very essence of all philosophy, most of all of Cartesian philosophy, that no authority be accepted as absolute and eternal. All systems are but the scum that threatens to encrust the surface of the living stream, and to clog its unceasing flow. So the Cartesian attitude was used, legitimately, against historical Cartesianism. But we must not forget that the indispensable cleansing and liberating process was, if not first practiced, at least most clearly exemplified in Descartes himself. His metaphysics, much of his logic, most of his science, may be—I am not competent to judge—on a par with his faith in the pineal gland: they are but the scoriae of his thought. Let us take away from him the formal vestments imposed by his time: then he stands in quiet majesty, as a hero of the mind, a free soul.

# THE CHALLENGE OF

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*by C. W. M. Gell*

FOR THE FIRST time since John Sobieski repulsed the Ottoman armies from the walls of Vienna in 1683 the Western world is threatened with military attack and forcible cultural penetration from the East. Now that the Russo-Communist menace is clearly perceived, there is a very wide measure of agreement that resistance is necessary to preserve spiritual, philosophical, and material values by which Western men generally set store. Such discussion as remains concerns the most effective and economical means to be employed and their timing in action.

Oriental reactions to communism are very much more complex and, in the total effect, indecisive. Communism, of course, has many aspects; its challenge, therefore, is not confined to a single issue, and the reaction it provokes is composed of several, and sometimes contradictory, attitudes or emotions. This is even more the case in Asia than in Europe. If for the sake of analysis we have to consider the various aspects of communism separately, we should remember that the division is artificial and that, while all Asian countries are threatened, these countries do not yet share a common view of their peril. For Asia has a much less uniform geographical, political, and cultural pattern than Western Europe or the Western Hemisphere.

The immediate emergency in Asia—the short-term aspect of the Communist challenge—is the task of containing Russian and Chinese imperialism. Neither of these is a new phenomenon. Russian policy closely follows the old lines of Czarist imperialism. The Chinese, whose imperial ambitions were dynastic and cultural, have been driven first by self-defense and now by ideology to become a militarized national state with the mentality which belongs to that condition. The interests of the two empires clash along their Central Asian peripheries, and especially in Manchuria, but like the Germans and Russians in 1939–41, they have temporarily composed their differences in view of the splendid prospects for their joint efforts to the south, where the rice bowl of Indo-China, Siam, and



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Burma, the rubber and tin of Malaya and Indonesia, and the millions of rich expatriate Chinese residents in Southeast Asia offer solid economic attractions. Not less attractive is the opportunity of making trouble for the Western colonial powers in this area and, for the Chinese, now that they are strong again, of repaying some of the humiliations suffered in the years of their weakness—the forcible opening of the country to the opium trade, the savage reprisals for the Boxer Rebellion, the commercial and territorial concessions extorted at the treaty ports, the right of foreign warships to patrol their rivers, and finally the unsuccessful Western participation in their recent civil war, which the patronage accorded Chiang Kai-shek in Formosa perpetuates.

The Western world needs to see this Sino-Russian imperialism for what it is—the re-emergence in other circumstances of the challenge of the despotic, totalitarian state which faced Europe in the 1930's. If we turn our resistance to armed aggression into a crusade against communism as an idea, we shall confuse the issues to our own detriment. For nowhere in the world are conditions so ripe for the Communist missionary as in Asia.

It is one of the paradoxes of the present situation in Asia that communism, despite its record in Europe, should be able to pose successfully as the champion of nationalism. This is partly due to the fact that Asiatics outside the USSR have not yet had the opportunity (which may develop in China) to learn from personal experience that communism may be only a new form of the old evil of colonialism; also partly due to the fact that communism is always the bitterest enemy of the established order, so that not only is there active Communist rebellion in the remaining colonial areas of Indo-China and Malaya, but the Communists have retained considerable prestige from their part in the recently successful struggles for independence all over Southern Asia. The glamour which attached to the anti-European agitator and terrorist is now a dangerous liability for the new Asian states, and only the late Sardar Vallabhai

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Patel in India has so far had the courage to grasp the nettle firmly. Sooner or later all these countries will be compelled to redefine the concept of treachery and to punish the disloyal with a severity they are far from showing today.

But while these newly sovereign peoples no longer require Communist help in liberating themselves from foreign political control, they greatly admire the Communist achievement in Russia and China and are today wondering whether they should emulate its methods. For in their new national pride they are acutely aware of the poverty of their countries, and of the fact that Russia and China were poor and weak and now are strong. Russia's success in transforming a backward agricultural country into one of the most powerful industrial states in the world in one generation and entirely by her own efforts makes a profound impression upon those whose problems appear similar. There has always been a divorce between the teaching of Oriental religions about the sacredness of life, and the practice of Oriental despotisms in lands inured to famines, floods, and epidemics that can carry off millions in a month or two. Consequently, the Asiatic is less squeamish than the European about the methods which the Russians employed. Not that he will deliberately court oppression, although he admires decisiveness; but he finds democracy difficult to operate where democratic traditions do not exist and only a fraction of the electorate is literate. And one of the legacies of the aggression (military, political, intellectual, and economic) which the Western world has practiced upon Asia for over two centuries is that of judging success by material standards—by industrialization and armaments and railways and greater agricultural yields. If he fails to convert his new but impoverished independence into a condition of material strength and prosperity by any other method, the Asiatic will be sorely tempted to try the Communist solution despite its inhumanity.

Hence the importance of President Truman's Fourth Point and the Commonwealth's Colombo Plan. But we must realize the formidable nature of the task. Southern Asia is an overpopulated and underdeveloped area with an average annual income per capita of \$60, as against \$1,200 for the United States. Political instability

and xenophobic legislation, which spring from fear of American and European economic imperialism, discourage foreign capital investment. Development, therefore, needs savings, which in turn do not exist until there has been development. Meanwhile, between fourteen and twenty million Indians are born each year, and the population of the whole area, barring catastrophies, will double itself in the next thirty years. Present plans, even if all goes well, will barely keep pace with this terrible fecundity.

If, then, the standard of living of the masses of Southern Asia is to be raised, which is the avowed intention of these plans, the plans will have to be pushed through with ever increasing momentum to outstrip the rate of human reproduction. The urgency of the problem, apart from the desire to forestall communism, may be judged by the fact that, whereas in American and Western Europe nearly everyone enjoys minimum standards of food and health, and improvements in the standard of living are concerned with increased leisure and supplies of consumer goods, the masses of Asia live in most unhygienic conditions upon a most inadequate diet; and that, even before the dislocation caused by the war, productivity and yields were falling. The Indian subcontinent, which is half as large as the United States of America, contains nearly three times the population. Since much of the area is desert, forest, or steep and lightly populated hillsides, the pressure of the existing population on the soil of the plains is something which those who have never visited India find hard to grasp.

The basis of the economic revolution that Southern Asia needs must be agricultural development. But there is no easy or simple solution for this. Irrigation from canals hundreds of miles long, built by British initiative, enabled what is now India and Pakistan to support precariously a doubled population within a century; but waterlogging from seepage is now putting out of cultivation increasing areas of hitherto fertile land, so that the final balance of desert reclaimed and good land ruined has not yet been struck. Bold and carefully planned schemes like the Gezira cotton plantations in the Sudan may develop small areas quickly, but the Tanganyika groundnuts fiasco is a warning to all who expect huge returns immediately.



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Any general solution involves revolutionizing the peasant tradition, and this can be done only by ruthless compulsion or by gradual education. Our premises deny us the former—the Communist—experiment, which in any case is still incomplete after thirty years of hard work and great suffering in Russia.

But anyone who has battled to convince the Indian cultivator of the practical advantages of antierosion measures, of the use of improved seed and agricultural implements, fertilizers, and manure, of more scientific crop rotation, and of the necessity for consolidating each man's holding (where the family's few acres may comprise nine or ten scattered strips) will readily agree that there is no more conservative society than the peasants' and that the pace of education is set by the length of the human generation. The new ideas must be sown into the children's minds and may bear fruit when *their* children reach maturity. Meanwhile, as this slow process gathers way, the Communists will not be idle. They will point with justifiable pride to the success of the redistribution of land in the sparsely populated regions of West and North China from which the Chinese Communists derived great credit, omitting to add that the nearer the Communists got to the densely populated riverine plains of Central and Southern China the slower and more tentative were their agrarian reforms. And they will be hard at work infiltrating into the industrial side of Asian development.

For it is only a partial truth that communism thrives on poverty. It makes little headway, for instance, among the seminomadic rural masses of Persia and the Middle East. Like all revolutionary movements, the danger point is not at the lowest ebb of hunger and poverty but where, the corner being turned, an underprivileged middle class begins to see its better prospects thwarted by established interests. No one doubts that side by side with the agricultural revolution in Asia there must be a great process of education and industrialization. But it would be folly not to realize that, so far from forestalling the Communist challenge, this may create the conditions for its success—the capture of newly formed (and often half-baked) trade-unions controlling the proletariat which industrialization inevitably breeds and which is the historic seed-bed of communism, and the



conversion of the semieducated middle-class intelligentsia, discontented with existing social hierarchies and denied the political power which their growing economic wealth and educational qualifications demand.

The attraction of communism for both these classes—the industrial and intellectual proletariat of the Revolution—is its aspect of social justice, and even of social vengeance. For communism as an idea is all the more dangerous and insidious because it embodies ethical impulses of wide appeal. As Professor Toynbee has said, it is a page torn from the Bible and read out of its context. It attacks Liberal Parliamentary Democracy with its own slogans and, as Toynbee further says:

The effectiveness of the Communist challenge suggests that the apostasy which has horrified the English, Dutch or American democrat when he has encountered it in Italian Fascism and in German National Socialism, must be a sin of which we democrats, too, have been guilty in some degree.

Whatever may be the truth of this in America and Western Europe, it is many times more true of the East, where the local capitalist is far too often all that the Communists make him out to be—merely a speculator, devoted to purely selfish and mercenary interests and unwilling to persevere with genuine investment, a black marketeer, a ruthless exploiter of labor, lacking altogether in the kind of enterprise likely to benefit the community. Much the same may be said of many Asiatic landlords. Significantly, India is seriously tackling agrarian reform, but the Congress party still owes too much to the great industrial magnates to devote itself wholeheartedly to curbing their excesses. It is generally true that capitalism, and its political influence, in most Asian countries is an increasing liability to the anti-Communist, as are the corruption and graft of most Oriental administrations. To both of these evils economic development gives new and richer opportunities.

The conclusion is not, however, that economic development should be abandoned. Irrespective of the Communist challenge, which has usefully infused a sense of urgency into the project, such development is the crying human need of the whole of Asia. If we of the West, who so long obstructed it or as foreigners treated it with

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apathy when we ruled most of South Asia, do not now assist it to the limit of our ability, the East will look elsewhere for help or for the example of the methods to adopt. But we should not imagine that this development is the answer to the challenge of communism as an idea. Unless very carefully controlled by governments with less partial interests than Oriental governments commonly have, it will promote communism. The answer to communism does not lie in the narrow field of economics, which is on its own chosen materialist plane, but in the realm of culture and the spirit.

Here once again the West must shoulder much of the responsibility for having helped to create in Asia the conditions in which communism can thrive. We have not yet understood how great was the disruption caused to Oriental culture by the impact of the modern materialist barbarism during those two centuries of systematic Western aggression of which we have already spoken. Though Europeans invaded Asia often with Christ on their lips, it was usually with predatory commercialism in their hearts, even in instances as recent as the Opium Wars in China and Commodore Perry's offensive patrol off Japan in 1854. The result has been to leave Asia, the most spiritually inclined of continents, from which all the world's great religious traditions have sprung, with its traditional cultures half broken and their heirarchy of values undermined by our materialist ones. It is from this point of view that the suppression of Tibet's independence is so grievous a loss to all mankind. For Tibet, alone of the countries of Asia, had preserved behind her mountain barriers a traditional society, permeated and enriched by a religious doctrine and hardly touched by Western materialism. If, as seems probable, the establishment of Chinese Communist suzerainty involves the suppression of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, mankind must share the loss with the Tibetans.

For the great issue of the modern world is not, as we are frequently told, between communism and democracy. It is between materialism, of which communism is only the most extreme, the most vicious, and the most intolerant form (but by which what is called "the American way of life" is almost equally pervaded), and the whole spiritual heritage of mankind—of which Asia was the

birthplace and is now the battleground. The Westernization of Eastern culture left Asia with its traditional authorities impaired and with a consciousness of its material poverty. Communism is admirably adapted to fill the vacuum. For in addition to its purely materialist philosophy and standards it has all the outward appearance of a religion—the infallible authoritarianism which delivers man from fear and uncertainty by promulgating a way of life founded on dogmatic assertions and which gives him the illusion of being a member of an all-conquering faith. What is to us the decisive argument against communism, that it is a tyranny and an abnegation of man's freedom to think for himself, has not the same force for those to whom the rule of the few would be a return to tradition and who are historically accustomed to a unitary organization of culture and political authority.

But although Asia's cultural traditions are seriously impaired and their scale of values obscured or polluted, they are not destroyed. There is already much evidence that Eastern thought is beginning to strive with the materialism of Western philosophy and slowly to prevail. We need only mention Schopenhauer, Schweitzer, Aldous Huxley, Guènon, Tagore, Radhakrishnan, Krishnamurti, the study of comparative religion, and the expansion of Buddhist and Theosophical societies. With the decline of Western political hegemony in Asia the indigenous spiritual traditions are reviving, and it is to these, to their age-old assertion that religion is the serious business of the human race, that we should look for the decisive long-term repudiation of the great materialist idolatry of communism. Certainly there needs to be a revival in the ceremonial, drama, and pageantry of these traditions and a greater stress than hitherto on their ethical implications, so that their outward forms and practice may catch men's fancy and inspire their loyalty. Most Eastern religions fortunately lack the dogmatic rigidity of the Christian creeds, which makes doctrinal modification so reluctant a process, and one of the better consequences of the Western invasion of the East has been to shake the social and moral conservatism of Oriental society. If we can hold off the imperialist challenge of communism and by our assistance free the Asiatic from

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having to adopt its economic methods in order to survive, the conditions exist for a great spiritual renaissance in the East.

Man, especially the Asiatic, has always felt the need to establish a relationship between himself and the Infinite, and his richest cultures have flowered from his various solutions to this mystery. Given time to distinguish its basic principles from its meretricious material attractions, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Jain, the Moslem, the Jew, the Taoist, the Zoroastrian—no less than the Christian—can hardly fail to perceive the appalling spiritual sterility of communism with its worship of Mammon and Juggernaut, which much of our Western culture shares and from which flows nearly all our present evils. The future of the human race may yet depend upon this spiritual revival in Asia and the intellectual conquest of the West by the ancient wisdom of the East, compelling us to revivify our own Christian tradition by a return from dogmatic theology and intolerant exclusiveness to the universal ethic of its Asiatic founder and thereby to re-create a living faith.



# ABOUT MY SONS

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by John R. Ferrone

THE ADDRESS was not in old Rome as he had hoped but there at the very edge of the city. Beyond was open country, shot now and then with an umbrella pine. And as he walked along the unpaved street, Gino saw ahead of him a labyrinth of orange tenement houses, almost the color of the dust he scuffed in, anchored in the ground with the casual permanence of Italian pumice and stucco. Unweathered and unlandscaped, the buildings had a new, unwrapped look.

How did Uncle Carlo come to live here, he wondered. It seemed only a short time ago, in the early months of the Mediterranean campaign, that packages of discarded winter clothing were sent to Rome and crisp American dollars were pinned to the tops of letters. Carlo, decided Gino, must have revived quickly from the war. But then wasn't all Italy reviving quickly? Stuffing himself on ECA and tourist dollars and at the same time muttering oaths against the *americani*, the *turisti*, the *pellegrini* . . .

He was not one, he had told himself, as the ship pointed into the Bay of Naples—a tourist or a pilgrim—at least not of the ordinary sort. His was a unique, private matter. He was coming to see the country whose beauties he had heard his parents speak of all his life and whose food and language he had been nourished on. He might say he was not a foreigner. He belonged to Italy, too . . . a dual citizenship in a way.

Walking along now, nearing the end of the street, he recalled that early feeling which made him special, standing there in the group at the prow of the ship as Ischia, Capri, and then Vesuvius came into sight. Naples! where he would receive his first welcome, the welcome for a cousin too long away.

They welcomed him, how they welcomed him! But not as cousin. He was an *americano*. They knew him somehow: by his shoes, by his belt, by the two back pockets in his trousers. He found himself

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arguing with the owner of a *trattoria* in Naples over a deft changing of menus . . . and prices; and in Sorrento found himself escaping a pink-faced nun, who had smiled benevolently, asked "*Italiano o americano?*" and whipped out a wooden box from the folds of her robes before he could answer, crying in English, "Give, give, give to the orphanage!" So it had gone. Robbed, cheated, begged from, solicited. What a welcome!

Seeing the number of the address at last, Gino went through a gateway and across an empty courtyard. Why couldn't Uncle Carlo have lived in the heart of old Rome, in the shuttered room of some medieval *palazzo* where Aunt Tina's cooking sent rich herby smells into the brocaded walls? It would have evoked a little of the dignity Italy had lost for him, made this less a duty detour.

A pale lizard zippered across the orange dirt in front of him and started up one of the walls where it hung in a crescent as though held by the sunlight. Italy was good lizard country, there was such an inexhaustible larder of flies. It's a wonder the little animals didn't grow to be monsters and start devouring *people*. But there were few flies here, for which Gino was thankful, hoping it indicated cleanliness in the apartments around him. Above, every other window gave out on a balcony, from which he imagined the women shouted and gestured to each other like Mussolini from the Palazzo Venezia, draped their cold-water laundry in the sun, or escaped the nighttime humidity of their rooms. As though it were the sign of some strange cult, a cluster of fat onions hung from many of the window frames. Gino wondered if Uncle Carlo or Aunt Tina might be watching for him. He was several days late and had not let them know of the change, there had been so many ruins and churches to see. No one watched. A girl in a beltless dress watered a vermilion geranium.

Stepping into a hallway marked *Scala A*, Gino went up a cement stairway. The apartment was on the second floor, identified by a brass plaque with the family name in a whirling script. In spite of himself, he smiled.

The woman who answered the door was tiny and agile, with a warm brown face unstill as a rabbit's. She peered at Gino for a second, put her hand to her mouth, then fled down the hallway calling,

"CARLO, CARLO, HE IS HERE. Come in, come in," she said, running back and motioning to Gino with a great fluttering of her arms. "We thought surely you would arrive Monday. CARLO!"

Turning in a confused circle, she ran ahead of Gino into the kitchen, pulled out all the chairs from the table so he might choose any one of them, whisked the flatiron from the flannel on the table, folded up the flannel after it, and returned the iron to a low gas flame. It all happened in a few seconds, Tina shrieking with laughter the whole time, as though she believed it was good to have much movement and noise when people are new to each other. She subsided in a swooping intake of air.

"Sit here," she said, "here . . . here . . . wherever you like."

But Gino was looking at a squat, doughy man sitting with a fixed smile like an ivory idol. A great balloon of flesh puffed over his trousers, and he wore an undershirt of knitted wool, exposing his shoulders, which sprouted long white hairs. And there was a look of age about him that came from a kind of ivoryed yellowness. His nails were yellow, the two teeth showing in his smile were yellow, his eyes around the iris were yellow, and even his mustache and thinning hair had a hint of yellow in them.

"Here," said Carlo, pulling a chair close to him, "by me."

When Gino came near, Carlo excused himself for not standing, took Gino's hand with an eager grasp, and pulled him close to kiss him on both cheeks, grazing his face with an abrasive growth of beard.

"Luigi's son," he said. His voice was abrasive, too. "How long we have waited—eh, Tina?"

Nodding and cackling with delight, her hands clasped, Tina stood apart as though Gino were behind glass.

"You, you!" she said. "Monday I fixed *cotoletta*. Tuesday, *involtino*. And Wednesday . . . what was it Wednesday . . ."

"But never mind," said Carlo. "He will stay with us for a while now."

"I must go back this afternoon," said Gino, prepared to add that he had bus reservations to Florence. Actually he would go to see the tumbled marble of the Roman Forum.

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"This afternoon!" Carlo scoffed. "Think how we must talk and eat and drink. This afternoon! No, I do not like it, not at all. Tina, the wine."

She responded as though he had pushed a button on her, and her scurrying made Carlo seem even older, less ambulatory. How wise Italian men were, Gino decided, who married women ten years younger than themselves. Tina brought three glasses and a bottle of white wine to the table.

"*'Orvieto'*," said Carlo. "It is good."

For the first time, Tina became aware of her husband's attire. "Look at him," she said, pointing with an empty glass. "Not even a shirt to cover his body. All dressed for company!"

"Run along," said Carlo. "Gino does not care, and besides I am not at the opera house."

"He is home all the time," Tina confided to Gino. "He does not even go to see his sons and their wives."

"Why?" asked Carlo, knotting his fingers at her, "when they come to see me? And one hundred kilos is too much weight for an old man to carry very far."

Gino had come to Italy with a meager knowledge of his uncle's life. The letters had always been few and since the war, fewer. But he had thought Uncle Carlo worked in a bakery or a restaurant.

"You do not go to work?" he asked.

"Work!" said Tina, teasing. "His only work is getting his body out of bed and back again." She imitated him snoring. "All the time," she said.

"Wait!" said Carlo. Then he turned to Gino to give his story, the truth. "In the morning I have my *caffè espresso* and bread. I read the paper—no, two papers. I have my *pranzo*, then I go to sleep. And what is wrong with that? I have nearly seventy years. One day," he said, "in the *panatteria*, I felt very ill—here, in the head. It was my blood, my heart . . . something. I took off my apron, dusted the flour from my hands, and crept out. I never went back. See? this hand does not move very well. My two sons said, 'You have worked long enough; we will take care of you.' They are good boys. You will meet them. My brother, does he work?"



JOHN R. FERRONE

"Yes," said Gino.

"But you will take care of him soon?"

Gino nodded. What good did it do to tell Carlo the best thing an old man can do to prolong his life is to remain active?

"That is fine," said Carlo. "You must take care of the old people. Without them . . . what would you be?" His upturned hands sustained the question. "But tell me more about my brother. He is happy?"

"Yes."

"And well?"

"Not too well. He has too much blood."

"Ah yes, like me."

"The doctor says he must drink only one glass of wine a day."

"And you say he is happy?" Carlo chuckled. "I remember when he could drink five liters of wine. By himself. Yes, five. He was young then and full of life like you. Tina, Gino has something of Luigi in him—about the mouth."

"Yes," Tina agreed, "his smile is like him, and his nose, too—straight and strong."

Carlo raised his glass. "Let us drink to your father."

They drank: Carlo and Tina, to a young man full of life who consumed five liters of wine at one sitting; Gino, to a quiet white-haired man who nursed one glass through his evening meal.

"You see?" said Carlo, draining his glass. "If I went to the doctor of your father, he would say, 'No more wine. You are old and will die.' But I know I am old and dying, and why should I want to live longer? Tina, some coffee . . . I have lived much." He reflected on this, as if reviewing the whole of his life, and then he said, "But how do you like Italy?"

"Italy?" Gino repeated. Carlo had an expectant smile. "Italy . . . Italy is fine. Sometimes I feel alone and strange."

"I know," said Carlo, "as it was for me in America. You know I have been there? And sent for your father?"

"Yes."

"Two times I was there, oh many years ago."

"Yes," said Gino. "During the war when my father had to worry

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about you so much, he said you should never have gone back to Italy."

"Who is to say?" said Carlo, "eh Tina?"

Tina cackled. In the presence of strangers, it was a safe, ambiguous answer to anything Carlo might ask. She had now put a shiny cylinder on the table, larger than a flashlight, with a hollow in its base for an alcohol wick. Carlo touched a match to the wick, setting up a transparent blue flame; then he pushed a demitasse cup under the slender spout curving from the side of the cylinder.

"Yes," he said. "Who is to say? I came back. And why? Because I could not stay."

No, thought Gino, America is not the place for you if you want to sit home and grow fat, a weight on your sons.

"There was work there," he reminded Carlo.

"Yes."

"Enough food."

"Yes."

"And money."

"And money . . . after. Let me tell you." Carlo could laugh now at the memory of the thing he was about to tell. "Let me tell you about my first job. It was at the dock, loading and unloading ships. You know?"

"*Stevedore*," Gino said in English.

"Yes, that was it. And I knew just two words: '*T'ank you*' and '*sonnamonbitch*.' Imagine yourself in Italy . . . Because I could not ask questions, I could only work. I worked hard, and at last I got my first pay. I was very happy walking along there on the dock, counting my money, looking downward. Then almost at my feet I saw a wallet. As far as the stove from me; but before I could reach it another man—out of the air he seemed to come—stepped in front of me and picked it up. Quick! Like that. You know how much was inside?"

Gino shook his head.

"One hundred dollars. The man could speak a little Italian. He said, 'Come on; we will share it.' He took me behind a shed where there were barrels of potatoes. 'First,' he said, 'I will need change.'

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I said, 'I have only a few dollars.' 'That will help,' he said. Just when he took my money another man came up, and they started to argue—'waa-waa-waa-waa' in English. I did not know why they argued. And suddenly the second man took the wallet, the money, and ran off. The first man ran after him."

"Of course," said Gino, who was anticipating.

"I ran, too," Carlo continued. "But I could not catch them." He shook his head over the recollection. "I had no one to tell this to. I walked, I walked. Then I saw the two men together talking and laughing. I ran up to them and said, 'Give me back my money.' They pushed me away thus; then they called a policeman. Now, I thought, I will get my money. They talked to him in English, and you know, he chased me off. I was more sad. I said to myself, what place is this where a policeman will not protect you!" He ended his recital as he had begun, with a laugh.

"Yes . . ." said Gino, uneasy with the feeling of an intended accusation in the story. "And then you came back? Because of that?"

"No, no. I stayed one year. I worked on a railroad, in a bakery, in a tailor shop . . . many jobs. Then I came back."

The coffeemaker on the table began to spurt out its black silt, and when one cup was half filled, Carlo pushed the second under the spout. The stream sputtered and ended in a bright, sagging bubble.

"I came back to get Tina," said Carlo, offering one of the cups to Gino.

"Yes," said Tina. She was putting a pot of water on the stove. "I was in America too. I worked *Broadway eh Fourteen Street*." It was the first English she had spoken in many years, and she shrieked at her courage.

"*Fiff floor*," Carlo added, following her cue.

"*I make araincoat*," Tina went on. "*First day I go to man, esk 'How I esk for job? Him tella me. I go to boss, I say the way the man say, 'Good morning Mr. JeckESS. Give me job, you sonnamon-bitch.*"

She laughed wildly at herself.

"*You got the job?*" Gino asked, grinning.

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*"What you t'ink? Him say, 'You goin' ahell."*

They all found this amusing, but at the same time Gino thought it was unfair of them to remember these episodes out of all they might have remembered.

"But some of the people were nice to you, weren't they?" he asked. "You had good times too?"

"Sure, sure," said Carlo. "Sometimes many of us from Italy would have a little *fiesta*. There was happiness too."

"But still you came back."

"Yes," said Carlo. "And how can I explain it to you? I cannot explain it to myself. I just did not feel right," he said with a churning motion over his belly. "Here inside."

"It is too bad," said Gino, thinking how they might not have been reduced to beggary during the war.

"But look," said Carlo, ending the memories with a slap on Gino's knee. "It was not all for nothing, those early days. You are here, happy and full of health, to reward me. A few meters of railroad I left behind, yes, and a little sweat. But you, you make me feel I have a share in your country. Here, your coffee is getting cold."

Gino took up the thickly sugared liquid and began to sip it like liqueur. With the same slow relish, he considered his answer.

"Sometimes," he said, "I think all Italy believes it has a share."

Carlo had the suspicion of a smile around his eyes.

"And maybe," he replied, "all Italy is right. In the past it has given much. In a way you cannot see." He cocked his head to one side. "Everything, you know, cannot be marked with a big white sign, 'Built by the ECA'."

He said it as easily as he put his cup in its saucer; to keep from making noise. But it jarred Gino.

Before he could answer, Tina, who seemed to be paying little attention, came chattering to show him a handful of stiff, uncooked spaghetti.

"You like this kind?" she asked. "Or do you want *rigatoni* or *tagliatelli*?"

"This is good," said Gino.



"Yes, yes," she agreed. "It is all good. But every little shape tastes different. It is funny. Does your mother fix this for you?"

"Every Thursday."

"Only on Thursday?" Tina clucked her tongue as she dropped the spaghetti into the boiling water, throwing in some salt after it. "See how thin you are! And your poor father . . . This one—if I did not fix *pasta* every day, he would bellow the roof down upon my head."

Frustrated by the interruption, Gino turned back to Carlo prepared to cancel out any share Italy might have by a revelation of its dishonesty and ingratitude. As though he foresaw this, Carlo asked, "And did you expect to find us in such a fine house?"

"It is nice," Gino managed to say. If American dollars had gone into it, the result was peculiarly Italian: the eternal stone floors, the small sink with its entrail drain exposed, the shuttered window opening to the balcony where a mint plant grew in a rusty can, the pale-green paint everywhere.

"Two years we have been here," said Carlo. "Before that, we lived over there, about two kilometers, near San Lorenzo."

"It could not have been as nice as this," said Gino, thinking to be flattering.

"It was not," said Carlo. "Not after the bombing."

"Ah," said Tina, joining in from her place at the stove. "You should see. So much plaster—like smoke—everywhere. My *ma-jolica* in pieces . . ."

"All our relatives came up from Naples, Capua, Benevento," said Carlo. "They thought Rome would never be bombed. Twenty-three of us living in our four little rooms."

"They brought lice," said Tina.

"But they were no safer here," said Carlo. "Two hours it lasted . . . in the noon sunlight. It was August. Poof! poof! poof! and San Lorenzo looks like the Roman Forum—but not so beautiful."

"The Allies did it, didn't they?" said Gino to rob Carlo of the chance for a pleasant accusation later.

"The Allies, the Germans . . ." Carlo replied. "It is all the same when you are being bombed."

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"Yes, it was the Allies," Gino repeated. "I remember the newspaper accounts. Protestants, Catholics, everyone protested."

"Because of damage to the Basilica."

"Yes . . . But the damage was slight, the newspapers said, and the railroad yards . . . they had to be bombed."

"Of course," said Carlo.

"It is surprising that no more damage was done. But the pilots and their crews were trained and trained until they knew every stone around San Lorenzo. It was called a classic example of pin-point bombing."

"Ah," said Carlo, "you cannot speak of pin points and bombs in one breath. But so, we forget. Soon there will be new buildings. Maybe they are there already. Italy is used to buildings over ruins. A church over a temple, houses over a market place. You never know what is under you, but because it is under you, you are higher, you see what I mean?"

Gino had an idea he was talking about roots. "Yes," he said, "I see. But you *are* more comfortable here, aren't you? Than you were in the other house?"

"Yes," said Carlo. "This does not smell from the *vespasiano* below our windows. It is clean, new. And it does not shake uh-uh-uh, thus, from the trains. But one gets tired of broken stone and plaster, you know? I believe all Italy is tired." He sighed as though to dramatize this. "Yes she is very tired, and she needs someone to take care of her."

"The United States, perhaps?" asked Gino.

"Who else can do it?"

"Who else would do it?" Gino faced Carlo squarely. If only Tina did not interrupt. "Do you know," he said, "how your country welcomes Americans? I could tell you some things . . . Always we are like a rich uncle from Siena, giving *marzapane* to his nieces and nephews and being hated for everything except his *marzapane*. Yes, the people who have their hands out to catch our money one moment would send us to hell the next. I do not understand it. Why, why should we do it? We ought to stop. Let these people do without

us for a while. Then they might show some gratitude. Why should we give and give and give where there is nothing but scorn?"

Carlo settled back in his chair as though he had decided to concede Gino his point and folded his hands placidly over his stomach.

"And how," he asked, "can these people accept as you wish them to where again, in the giving, there is no love?"

"Here," said Tina, "look! The spaghetti is almost done. Are you hungry, Gino?"

"I want to tell you something," Carlo said, ignoring her. "Something about my sons." He leaned toward Gino. "My sons . . . they are young; they are strong; they make enough lire to feed all of us. But they are not yet wise. You cannot hurry wisdom any more than you can hurry good wine, good cheese. Now they take care of me. Did I ask them to do it? No. They did it out of love, and from remembrance of all I did for them while they were still young. And what do you think I would do if they did it out of jealousy for one another, or resentfully, or so they could say to their neighbors, 'See how good we are!' What do you think I would do?" His eyes narrowed. "I would spit on their money and send them from my house. Yes, and I would crawl down to the *panatteria* dragging my old man's stomach on the ground, and put on my apron again before I would take another lira from them."

There was a silence; Carlo held his pose, and then his face relaxed. Slapping Gino on the knee once more as though all had been forgotten, he chuckled and said, "Luigi's son." Tina was saying, "See, Carlo, see!" quite impatiently. "I think it is ready!"

She had dipped her fork into the kettle and come up with one steaming strand of spaghetti, which she brought to Carlo, holding her free hand underneath to keep it from dripping. Carlo took the strand between his fingers, dangled it above his mouth, sucked it between his two yellow teeth, and began to chew. As though he was about to render a decision of the greatest importance, Tina stood watching.

"A little little too much," he pronounced finally. "But it is done."

Tina, it was clear to Gino, knew as well as Carlo when spaghetti

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was cooked; and yet she suppressed her own woman's judgment. In everything Carlo had to rule! But it should have been a ludicrous moment, this of the old man chewing noisily. Gino wanted it to be; wanted to see incongruity between patriarch and spaghetti taster; wanted to laugh inwardly. If you made someone ludicrous, you could discount much of what he said. But somehow, Gino discovered, you couldn't make Carlo ludicrous if you tried. It didn't matter how his bristling jaws made noise as he chewed, or how his belly pushed open the top button of his pants, or how his physical being moldered. The mind behind the yellowed eyes, the accumulated richness of his life, overshadowed all. If Gino had found him in that brocaded room in the heart of old Rome he could not have had more dignity.

Carlo was watching him. "Let me see you smile," he said. He pulled Gino's face around by the chin. "I think you have been traveling too much and are tired. We will all feel better after we have eaten. Tina . . ."



## *The Prodigal*

ERIC WILSON BARKER

Above the sucking and the swirling sounds  
Leaning and looking down  
Where gulls fall sheer,  
There, at my terror's end,  
I watch my body drown.

Falling and falling down a cliff of air  
A prodigal returning to the sea,  
Clutching at farewell sky,  
The eyes straining  
After the last rock, the last tree.

Rope of sunlight burning through the hands,  
Image on image breaking in the mind,  
Remembered miracles  
Of daily love  
Bright almost as to blind.

Earth essences, all treasures of the air  
Fused fierce and instant through the porous light,  
The final vision  
Clear as flame is clear  
Seared on the sight.

Before the cradle of innumerable swells  
Pities its child no further light can bear,  
Enters through lips  
As through its sea-shaped shells,  
Sings in the silent ear.

by Max J. Herzberg

NOT LONG ago someone ventured to intimate, in talking to a group of English teachers, that humor, and particularly American humor, might well appear more frequently as a pabulum in our classrooms, since humor is probably the most characteristic of American folkways. It did not take long for murmurs to arise. What, break a delicate butterfly like humor on the ruthless wheel of pedagogical treatment! Apparently, it is not amiss to submit "She Was a Phantom of Delight" to classroom discussion, to run without hesitation the risk of smashing Lamb's "Blue China" as we analyze it, and to distill Hamlet's too solid flesh in the not so delicate alembics of our scholarship. But it would be sinful to do that with humor; the hazard there is too great. We must not maltreat *Roughing It*, by that ethereal spirit, Mark Twain; David Harum and Mr. Dooley, frail and diaphanous creatures, would never withstand our critical scrutiny.

I grant that this reluctance to drag the jester and the jest into the classroom is not without reason. For one thing, laughter—at least in the more formal past—has been the schoolmaster's enemy; it has been a dissolvent of dignity and discipline, a sign that the pedagogical steed is running away. Teachers have chosen to forget that laughter was a sound constantly heard as Socrates moved among his disciples. In recent years, one is relieved to report, a more human and humane atmosphere in the classroom has made it possible for schoolmaster and student to laugh together without perceptible damage to scholarship; the master may occasionally relish or perhaps even make a joke on himself. He has come to realize, at any rate, that if he doesn't, someone else will; and he might as well be first. The contemporaneous wisecracking professor is a character whom Theophrastus or Overbury would have delighted to depict.

Of course no one had it in mind, when advocating more common use of our great humorous writings as teaching material, to advocate also that doctoral candidates count the number of misspelled words

# PRIMORDIAL TO PARADISAL

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in Josh Billings or establish a correlation of .89277 between Mark Twain's several changes of residence and his use of periodic and loose sentences.

It may be maintained rather that the history of human laughter is one of amazing interest, and that our nonseriousness is worthy of serious attention. A flood of illumination is thrown on our national and group differences by a consideration of the causes and characteristics of laughter. Strange, for example, is the parallel humor of the United States and China; and one may find striking similarities in the satire of such far-removed writers as Petronius and James Joyce. Moreover, what I may roughly call the philosophy of laughter makes clearer both the evolution and the essence of human nature. Also the occasions that produce laughter among young people today (older ones, too) are well worthy of study, at times not without misgivings—even though it ought by no means to be the purpose of any such study to stop (in Leontes' phrase in Shakespeare) the career of laughter with a sigh.

Of all the vast and variegated aspects of humor perhaps a view of its internationalism is most pertinent at this moment in history. Is there any internationalism in humor? Can we lend-lease jokes? Is laughter a help or a hindrance in building up good will among mankind?

## II

An answer to these queries demands, of course, that we engage in what is well known to be the most unhumorous of all vocations—an analysis of humor. Few philosophers have resisted the temptation to indulge in this analysis, in recent years with all the help they could muster from physiology, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and psychiatry.

Anthony Ludovici's description of the origins of laughter seems as plausible as any. With him one may believe that a laugh was at

## HUMOR: PRIMORDIAL TO PARADISAL

the beginning merely an inhibited snarl—and sometimes not so inhibited at that. The snarl itself is the showing of one's teeth at an oncoming foe. It is a danger reflex. It is angry, fearful, protective, and terrifying all at once. It seeks to frighten an enemy by a threat of imminent teeth and ready claws. Among animals it is accompanied by sound effects that enforce the visual menace. Early in the history of mankind the angry growls of the animal world are replaced by words of vituperation. In ancient literatures—Arab and Irish, for example—the satirist with his gift of snarling insult was as important a battle figure as the spearman or the archer. His slanderous and abusive rhymes terrified the foe; he pronounced horrid and obscene incantations high over the skirmish.

With Nature's inveterate stinginess, her frugality in employing all the muscular and osseous odds and ends in our bodies for new purposes when the old purposes are outworn, the laugh uses much the same facial muscles as the snarl, makes almost as complete a dental display, has behind it similar psychological impulses but with a decline in tension and emotion, and may be described as a modified snarl manifested on an occasion of nonphysical danger. The laugh is still inimical, but it is a verbal missile substituting for spear and tomahawk, arrow and slingshot because the enemy is now within the clan's gates, too weak to cause any serious trouble, and yet an enemy. We're just playing with him.

An odd confirmation of this hypothesis is afforded by a passage in Richard Wright's *Black Boy*. In that pitifully vivid and pitifully intolerant plea for tolerance Wright describes his grandfather. "Grandpa was a tall, black, lean man with a long face, snow-white teeth, and a head of woolly white hair," he says. "In anger he bared his teeth—a habit, Granny said, that he had formed while fighting in the trenches of the Civil War—and hissed, while his fists would clench until the veins swelled. In his rare laughs he bared his teeth in the same way, only now his teeth did not flash long and his body was relaxed."

What makes the victim of the laugh a foe? His offense is alienism, foreignness, otherness. "Sir, for all I can see," declared



## MAX J. HERZBERG

Dr. Samuel Johnson flatly, "foreigners are fools!" Laughter, born of xenophobia, is our reply to the foreigner's offense, which consists simply and completely in being himself. This laughter is a protective instinct, guarding the integrity of the tribe, the group, the gang, the club, the sewing circle against revolution and alteration. Even today few social codes have attained the enlightenment of the law of Moses several thousand years ago: "If a stranger sojourn with you in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you: and thou shalt love him as thyself." *Our* instinctive reaction is, on the contrary, not to love him but to laugh at him. Our cachinnatory snarl soon frightens him into flight or conformity. The laughter of satire, declared Meredith, is a blow in the back or on the face.

Anyone who talks differently, who wears a homburg when an opera hat or a beret is "proper," who eats with the wrong fork or the wrong hand, who doesn't understand the mumbo jumbo of our various social mysteries, who comes from another city or lives in our own city on that side of the railroad where we ourselves don't live, anyone at all *other* is per se provocative of laughter. He may be an immigrant, a refugee, a person of higher or lower social or educational station, the native of another town or another region, a man who doesn't belong to our frat or lodge, a new neighbor moving in from three streets down, someone of different creed or color, a revolutionary urging new ideas that threaten stability, or a member of the N.A.M. stranded in Union Square. He always seems a maverick, a *ronin*, an outlander, a fellow who doesn't belong; and he is therefore in some manner ridiculous. For by his otherness he endangers, greatly or slightly, our institutions and vested interests. We show our enmity in laughter that is close to snarls.

Moreover, the person who is *other* feels his own strangeness as he joins a group alien to him, and fears uneasily that he'll be laughed at, sometimes for he doesn't know what. Our laughter, when it comes, puts him in his place, makes him feel acutely uncomfortable, warns him that he mustn't go too far in his dangerous practices and suspicious habits, or else our laugh will again become a snarl. If you

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go by a group and they glance at you and somebody laughs, your first surmise is that their laughter is on your account, and you feel uneasy. Boris Sidis wrote:

To be classed with the rejected, with the inferior, with the abnormal is humiliating to the average man and more so the average woman. The average "normal" man and woman dread ridicule. The power of ridicule is so potent, the fear of it is so overwhelming that the stoutest of hearts turns coward and runs. Neither persecution nor social ostracism can equal in repressive force social gibe and jeer. The true hero is he who can ignore social ridicule.

Bill Mauldin, whose war cartoons from Italy were another proof that humor is not by any means always funny, wrote in the thoughtful interpretation that accompanied his collection called *Up Front* that when men in combat outfits "kid" each other, they have a sort of family complex about it. No outsiders may join in such kidding. Anybody who did a dangerous job in the war had his own particular kind of ridicule, and sometimes, Mauldin testifies, it didn't even sound like kidding. If a stranger came up to a group of paratroopers in this mood, they were likely to ignore him. If he took it upon himself to laugh at something funny they had said, their expressions would freeze, and they would stare at him until his stature shrank to about four inches. If he knew what was good for him, he'd slink away, and they'd resume their kidding. "It's like a group of prosperous businessmen," says Mauldin, "telling a risqué joke and then glaring at the waiter who joins in the applause."

### III

It is true that what I have been describing is only a primary form of humor. There is also another kind of laughter, one in which satire and insult are transformed into what we more ordinarily call humor as marvelously as in the extraordinary evolutionary process by which fish gills somehow became human ears. In this secondary kind of laughter it is no longer the foreigner who is ridiculed and made to feel small. It is rather our own outwearing or outworn customs,

taboos, folkways that are daringly and playfully, sometimes unwittingly exposed to sudden and unexpected ridicule. The resultant laugh vibrates with delight at the abrupt violation of a sacred notion, even if it is no more than a dictum of Noah Webster's on spelling or the notion that a man in a frock coat and high hat is an awesome dignitary—but not when he slips on a banana peel.

Here the laughter is likely to corrode and eat away what is probably already a decaying custom or a riddled and moth-eaten idea. The laughter pushes it subtly out of the realm of superstitious observance into the realm of common sense. Or it may be a convention to which undue reverence is being paid; the laughter makes us feel our superiority to the convention and puts it in its place.

Long ago Sir William Temple gave a startling example. "An ingenious Spaniard at Brussels," he wrote, "would needs have it that the *History of Don Quixote* had ruined the Spanish monarchy: for before that time Love and Valor were all romance among them; every young cavalier that entered the scene dedicated the services of his life to honor first, and then to his mistress. They lived and died in this romantic vein. . . . After *Don Quixote* appeared, and with that inimitable wit and humor turned all this romantic honor and love into ridicule, the Spaniards began to grow ashamed of them, and to laugh at fighting and loving, or at least otherwise to pursue their fortune and satisfy their lust; and the consequence of this, both upon their bodies and their minds, this Spaniard would needs have pass for a great cause of the ruin of Spain or of its greatness." Byron, not averse to ascribing such might and influence to humor, summed up this "ingenious Spaniard's" belief in the famous line, "Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away."

Nature has, furthermore, provided a third kind of humor, which may be described as a protective humor. To save us from hurt, from the bitterness of feeling small and inferior when something we are or something we do has provoked the cruelty of laughter at our expense, time has gradually grown on the consciousness of the sensitive and the intelligent an integument that we call a *sense of humor*. A sense of humor warns us in advance, sometimes long before the



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occasion for defense actually arises, that we are about to be laughed at, or that some custom or manner sacred to us is about to be ridiculed. Then, to take away the mental sting, we laugh too, laugh in advance, laugh more heartily than anyone else. It's the surest way in the world to deprive the laughter of his sadistic satisfaction, to turn a would-be snarl into a reluctant smile, a gibe into a grin. The ultimate in this realm is for the person about to be ridiculed to go one step further: to make the joke at his own expense. In the course of time, too, one develops a sympathetic vein, so that the sensitive person understands the predicament of others at whose expense a jest is about to be turned, and laughs with them against the ridiculer.

In the American way of living this integument is kept in a constant state of resilient toughness by means of a characteristic folkway already referred to—"kidding." Kidding becomes a rough-and-ready way of testing one's H.I.Q.—Humor Intelligence Quotient. Your buddies and your neighbors, your co-workers and your colleagues, your lodge brothers and your golf pals try you out with gibes, sneers, jabs, and insults—to see if you can "take it." You grin cheerfully, and come right back with gibes, sneers, jabs, and insults directed at everybody else. It is a mutual exercise in one's ability to anticipate and enjoy (or seem to enjoy) jokes at one's own expense. The accolade is: you have a good *sensahuma*.

Thus satire may be regarded as ridicule of foes, of wrongs and wrongers. Humor is playful ridicule of decaying taboos and customs. A sense of humor is a premonitory awareness that laughter will be directed against us; as a defense, we laugh beforehand to show that we don't care—even if we do.

One ought perhaps not to forget, as an extraordinary phenomenon, the pristine and lovely innocence of infants, animal and human, which no evolutionist has yet been able to explain; in this innocence smiles dawn that have no identity with the snarls of hatred or the sneers of contempt that among mortal humans we call laughter. Perhaps it was this divine humor that Dante visioned in Paradise, a state of soul in which "the very universe seems one long laugh." But the pediatrician is likely to say practically, "Just a muscular reflex of good digestion."



## IV

In all of these occasions for laughter it seems clear that laughter is likely to be parochial rather than world wide. Most jokes, as John Palmer long ago observed, carry no naturalization papers; indeed, they do not even have passports enabling them to go from one century into the next. There are almost no laughs in last year's jests. Jokes are not merely not international; they are usually not even intertemporal. The humor has fled from the intriguing slaves of Menander and Terence hardly to a greater degree than it has departed from the comical Irish, German, and Russian immigrants of a generation ago who so amused our American stage. Macaulay, holding a copy of Homer in the Greek, walked along an English road and read of the death of Hector with tears flowing down his cheeks, but there are no reliable records of scholars who have burst a blood vessel with laughter at a scene in Aristophanes or Ben Jonson.

Some themes, however, seem to be as universal and eternal as humanity and human nature in their provocation of laughter, although even these themes tend to change their garb and appearance from country to country and era to era. Naturally, sex is the chief of these international *motifs* of laughter; one may note, too, the general appeal of the humors of hunger and the extent to which physical and mental defects, ailments, and pains have been found ridiculous, from absent-mindedness and stammering all the way to flagellation and death.

Thus the first recorded laugh in the Bible is a sex snicker; and it is in the Bible, too, that an irreverent fleer at baldness brings disaster to certain youthful jokers who went too far, as all jokers inevitably do. Perhaps the scene in Greek comedy at which audiences today are most likely to laugh heartily is the one in *The Frogs* in which Dionysus and his boy are alternately thrashed to discover which is god and which slave. Catullus draws a satiric portrait of a fellow who drops his aitches, and the Roman poet found this fellow as funny as we find a similarly speaking Cockney, who may in fact be a lineal descendant of one of the founders of ancient Londinium. Among the Japanese, who are almost as antihumorous as a Prussian

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*Junker* with dueling scars and a belief in the master race, there lived a comic novelist named Jippensha Ikku whose life was funnier than his stories. Ikku gave orders that on his demise his body was to be cremated, and that with the body should be placed certain sealed packages. The prayers were read, the torch applied; and then, to the astonishment of all, a series of explosions took place as the packages—all fireworks—were ignited. Ikku went up in Roman candles, shooting stars, pin wheels, and giant crackers. The violation of the taboo that death is to be an occasion only for dismal solemnity brought involuntary laughter.

Of course the indubitable foreigner, the man actually from another land, is an inevitable and perennial butt. It's his speech that offends us first; he's just able to stammer a few words, the stupid dolt, and even to the highly enlightened and rational Greeks he onomatopoetically became a *barbarian*. Any learned traveler, resident for a few hours or a few days among some primitive tribe like the Indians who dwell on the Kootenay River, finds the clicks and grunts they call a language extremely amusing, but he is naturally quite unconscious of the equal amusement he affords the benighted red men when, for example, he struggles with the thick native gutturals and pronounces the word for *rainbow* exactly like that for *horsefly*.

It is of interest to note what Homer's characters found funny; the famous fight between the beggar Irus and the seeming beggar Odysseus throws light on the subject:

Then the twain put up their hands, and Irus struck at the right shoulder, but the other smote him on his neck beneath the ear and crushed in the bones, and straightway the red blood gushed up through his mouth, and with a moan he fell in the dust, and drave together his teeth as he kicked the ground. But the proud wooers threw up their hands, and died outright for laughter.

Hierocles, the Greek proto-Joe Miller, whose jestbook was for several centuries a *Try-and-Stop-Me* treasure-trove for all the Hellenic gagsters and after-dinner entertainers, made *Maltese* a term of ridicule, and when that geographical opprobrium didn't fit, had his butts and noodles hail from Cumae in Italy. It is noticeable that this ancient Joe Miller, in his respectable classic guise, is not in-

cluded among the one hundred best books of St. John's College, by way of complement to Newton's *Principia Mathematica*, Boyle's *Sceptical Chymist*, and Leibnitz' *Monadology*. The authorities of that institution ought at least to have listed *De Oratore*, that instructive book by Cicero, who was sometimes called *scurra consularis*, "the consular buffoon," and who devoted a goodly section of his treatise to a discussion of whether a man can learn to be funny—with Julius Caesar as one of his interlocutors. A few of the jokes cited are still current today.

Shakespeare, like the Elizabethan jokebooks he so frequently consulted, unfailingly found all Welshmen, for some reason, funny; and in a famous scene in *The Merchant of Venice* he provided a progenitor for many American vaudeville scenes—the lively passage of dialogue in which Portia holds up Italians, Germans, Frenchmen, Scotsmen, and, for good measure, Englishmen successively to ridicule.

One may take as an instance of the incredibly minor details on which international disputes and satire turn the fact that during the early part of the nineteenth century in the United States, it was regarded as a sign of honest and staunch Federalism to wear small-clothes, whereas the damnable Jacobin radicals wore trousers. In our own time any similar symbolism in male and female garments, once a fruitful cause for jokes, has been largely rendered impracticable by imitative changes in female fashion, although the ladies also make lavish use of Russian peasant shawls and of Shylock's gabardine, thereby no doubt indicating a leftist trend.

## V

Not unreasonably, some of these manifestations of laughter have aroused in some modern observers more than a little anxiety. Perhaps it's all right, they remark, for the high gods of ancient Greece to roar with inextinguishable laughter—that *gelos asbestos* of Homer—at lame Hephaestus limping his way round the Olympic banquet table with a trayful of nectarean highballs. It may be all right, too, for the rude Elizabethans to guffaw at poor mad Tom i'



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the straw. But as humanitarians they are themselves almost ready to adopt the creed of Lord Chesterfield, who informed all who cared to listen, "I am sure that, since I have had the full use of my reason, nobody has ever heard me laugh." The Bible had expressed the same attitude much earlier: "A fool lifteth up his voice with laughter, but a wise man doth scarce smile a little."

Especially laughter at religious and racial differences or at traits or handicaps for which the individual is not responsible seems to these contemporaneous observers an alarming symptom of a dangerous popular tendency: and Harrison Smith urged recently, "Let us have no more of ridicule that transforms people's misfortunes into comedy."

Was that why Shelley said: "I am convinced that there can be no entire regeneration of mankind until laughter is put down"? One may imagine some violent revolutionary movement of the year 2050, emanating perhaps from a group of neo-Bolsheviks in Antarctica, who carry a dull-blue banner with the device, "Down with smiles! Death to laughter!" On the other hand, it may be argued that this slogan is supererogatory for any devotee of the works of Karl Marx.

Perhaps we ought to ask: Can humor ever serve international purposes? There are signs today that it is transcending the national. It's harder to get a laugh at that which is merely British or Russian or Chinese, even that which is quaintly Arab or Hawaiian or Hottentot. The big hatreds and therefore the great satiric divisions of mankind are along what may be called (by a horrid antihumorous term) ideological lines. Mankind is beginning to split vertically by ideas instead of horizontally by nationalities. It is democracy against totalitarianism, free enterprise against communism, peace-seeking against militarism; and there is some slight evidence that laughter, close again to the snarl, is aware of the new battle lines.

As air-borne commerce, rocket flights, television and radio and the movies, international conferences and organizations, widely circulated books in many languages, the dominance of English and Russian in world education, and other probably unifying factors tend to make men alike, from orange juice for breakfast to bridge



at night and from New York fashions for women to the dollar exchange in trade, the fund for laughter found in odd customs, ideas, and attitudes will more and more diminish.

So possibly the danger really lies in another direction. If we attain our present social and humanitarian goals, if we actually secure greater prosperity and happiness for mankind, if gradually, decade by decade, century by century, millennium by millennium, we correct wrongs and abuses, often perhaps through the agency of antiseptic laughter, what is it we shall accomplish? By strict logic it will have to be a solemn cosmos, a laughterless Utopia, a state of perfection in which that ludicrous activity, sex, will no longer be here to stay but will necessarily be abolished, perhaps in favor of a parthenogenesis that will make the male animal, ridiculous creature, quite expendable. It will be a world in which pleasure will be tediously uncomplemented and unenhanced by pain, in which deformity will disappear from the very dictionary, and in which even all the angles whatsoever will have to be straight. Humor, in other words, is constantly contriving its own suicide; the laughter it engenders will destroy the cause of the laughter. All nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues shall be perfect.

On that evilless earth the echoes will never resound again with raucous human laughter. But the eternal gods, no longer roaring with Homeric guffaws at the irresistibly funny lameness of Haphaestus, will still, no doubt, find cause for merriment as they contemplate the world. Perhaps they will be moved to mirth as they watch two contradictory absolutes colliding in the cosmos, as these have an annoying habit of doing; or when they behold the ludicrous clash of non-Euclidean parallel lines, meeting at last in a misty illogic. Then their vast cachinnations will reverberate in the hollow caverns of heaven, startling mankind with a nostalgic wonder.

# THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

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by *Kenneth Oliver*

OUR GENERATION lives in an era of fear, almost of certainty, that a new age of barbarism is descending upon the earth. We see proof of that barbarism in the events which turn the "cold war" into hot thrusts of battle along the Asiatic edges of the Soviet satellite empire. We might reconcile ourselves to facing a semicivilized opponent, if we could only hold him at bay by his knowledge of our civilized superiority. But we have been disillusioned of this possibility. Reluctantly, with the dogged will to recognize the truth, we have at last realized that destruction must also be our own theme; the sinews of our civilization must flex to build for destruction, and all of the clever devices of our technologically skilled minds must concentrate on it. We must tighten our belts, accept increased taxes, exchange some of our butter for guns.

Have we, then, leisure or occasion for the study of literature and the fine arts? On our college campus a few days ago, I overheard a student who was angrily thumping a term paper which had just been returned to him. "Spelling!" he all but spat out. "Hell, I don't need to spell; all I need to know is—" and raising his arms to waist-high level he swung slowly on his heels, sounding the throaty stuttering which represents machine-gun fire.

What shall we say to this young man and to the many, many more who may be soldiers in our defensive army—whose entire generation seems likely to be one of threatening or actual conflict? What shall we reply to those sincere young men who say to us, "I don't need literature; I don't need 'cultural' subjects: all I need is a good weapon, good ammunition, and a good aim." We must admit that in these he has a powerful and—in our times—a necessary trinity. They might ask further, these potential soldiers and laborers of the age of violence, if their knowledge of the past allows them to frame the question; they might point out that we professors grow moist-eyed in our praises of Greece and Rome, and ask, "Why should we study civilizations which have failed? Rome was a gran-

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deur of marble buildings and steel-willed men, but those have crumbled, these have decayed, and Rome is no more than a memory. If all we have to offer is a rhapsody for a culture which failed to meet its challenge, might we not do better in learning to swing lethal weapons with maximum effect; might we not better spend our energies on technology, production, and destructive efficiency?"

On the surface this is convincing. Not only many of our students, but also many of our highly trained experts—who became "specialists" without having acquired any real understanding of our cultural tradition—will inevitably feel that literature is a waste of time, an escape from reality, an evasion of the bitter truths and hard necessities in a nation whose peace and existence are challenged.

There are two answers to this "practical" point of view. One is personal, the other social. On the social level, it is demonstrable that ideas, traditions, ideals are not the unearned heritage of any generation. They are not born full grown, nor do they transmit themselves automatically. The idealism which gave birth to the American Constitution was not born with Benjamin Franklin or John Hancock or Thomas Jefferson. It had been long decades in germinating. Nor was it fully grown in 1783. The body of amendments to our Constitution reaches well into the twentieth century, and modification by interpretation continues.

So with the concept of human dignity. Homer, the blind poet of the Trojan war and of Ulysses' long voyage home, certainly presented a rich concept of human dignity. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Virgil, Dante—these each contributed, one might almost say, measurable quantities to our concept of human dignity. The authors of Job wrestled with the angel of human dignity; Thomas Hardy was thrown by the same angel, but not without learning something which we all want and need to know; Shakespeare saw deeply into the irony of a fate which increases one's will to human worth while at the same time rendering that will impotent.

Yes, if the civilization which we are to preserve by leaning more

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heavily upon the trinity of weapons, ammunition, and skill is worth saving, the tradition of human dignity is largely what makes it so. But America will not always revere the individual for his personal worth, just because it is America. We shall cherish democracy—founded upon the dignity of man—only so long as we relearn in every generation the tradition which gave its unique character to our land. And this does *not* mean so long as we write and read laudatory histories. The perpetuation of an ideal stems only from the continuous rebirth of the ideal. America was born of deeply ingrained literary consciousness, and of the intellectual and emotional conviction that the ideal man which revealed himself in literature was closer to reality than the embittered and half-starved peasant or factory hand who could be seen in the flesh in every generation from Adam's children to Europe and Asia (and to a lesser degree America) of 1951. It was because that ideal man of literary imagination *was* more real than decaying flesh that the United States was born and endured. And when his reality fades, when he becomes a phantom vision reserved for moments of retreat from a world in which the only "real" reality is made up of guns, gadgets, and get-the-dollar, then the civilization for the defense of which we must abandon "culture" is already dead, without any further push from the Russians and their satellites. Yes, the social reason why purposeful young people must be led to study literature and cultural subjects in general is that our particular society cannot live without that study. I suspect that no other society of any worth can do so, either. At least none ever has, within historical knowledge.

The personal reasons for the study of literature may be many. Directions of study are often chosen before any real maturity is reached, so that simple inclination furnishes the impetus. When this is so, there need be no feeling that in following one's inclination toward books he is failing to contribute in a "real" sense to the needs of his country. No need is greater.

Professional hopes relative to writing or teaching lead many into the fields of literature, and this is good. But it is the nonprofessional who needs reasons, and our generation of new barbarism



## KENNETH OLIVER

rather intensifies than lessens the values of literary study. In a world whose survival is brought under doubt, which lives under the shadow of the atomic bomb and draws daily upon news of hatred, dissention, and bellicose preparation for conflict, the first need is for perspective, for the tempering influence of human wisdom which is drawn from hundreds of generations. Most generations have been familiar with war. Dozens of times in recorded history the world has been threatened with disaster. In the sixteenth century the Moslem world was pushing Christianity back on land and sea. Pagan hordes threatened an end to civilization. The battle of Lepanto broke the sea power of Islam, and the world was saved. Cervantes, creator of that emaciated Knight of the Woeful Countenance *Don Quixote* and his rotund and earthy squire Sancho Panza, took part in the battle of Lepanto. A shattered hand was his badge of honor, for it reminded him of his participation. A few years later he devoted his efforts to gathering supplies for the Invincible Armada, which, seen by English eyes, was a new threat to a noble culture. And a few generations before, it was the French peasant girl Joan of Arc who rescued the sacred soil and civilization of France from the barbaric hand of the rude English.

To recite such facts is easy, and useful, if at all, only in a small way. But through literature to experience again and again the disaster of a perishing civilization, and to find the human spirit surviving the defeat of empires, is a wholesome experience whose fruits are perspective and confidence. There *is* human dignity. There *are* values which even atomic bombs will not destroy. And there is personal balance, calmness, security to be achieved through the perspective which literature offers.

Our way of life is threatened. True. Yet in a very real sense "our way of life" is not yet achieved. Our concept of human dignity cannot be satisfied with 1951, just as it could not be satisfied with 1861—when, once again, that way of life was threatened. If America has made a worth-while contribution to civilization, it has been the insistence on a dynamic concept of civilization itself. Governments are not static, cannot be satisfied to remain fixed as long as man is worth more than the physical life available to him. The

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greatest threat to the American way of life is the threat that it may cease to grow. It will not cease to grow so long as serious, intelligent young men and women study the traditions out of which we have developed. It will cease to grow, will decay and perish very quickly when that study ends. These are the answers to the young people who say, "Why should I study literature while the world falls apart at the seams?"

### *Deprivation*

HELEN PINKERTON

Continual deprivation now  
Where hope was possibility  
When innocence could still endow  
The growing heart with charity.

The unbent head wins at the cost  
Of that which it would overthrow.  
Anguish affirms what has been lost,  
What innocence could never know.

Can pride allay the separation,  
Comfort the one who will endure,  
Who gives no other affirmation  
Than love's retractless forfeiture?

# WHERE *FULBRIGHT* IS

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## A MAGIC NAME

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*by J. Y. Bryan*

WHILE promoting mutual understanding between the Philippines and the United States through an exchange of professors and students, the Fulbright program in the Philippines has made a specialty of assisting in the rehabilitation of an educational system seriously damaged during the war.

Soon after the Japanese arrived, they imposed an educational blackout. They burned great accumulations of books, particularly books in English, and meticulously destroyed educational equipment in laboratories, libraries, and museums wherever their force was large enough to minimize the danger of reprisals.

A common practice of the invaders was to convert school buildings into arsenals, barracks, or hospitals. During Liberation many were mined or set afire while being abandoned; others became targets for American bombing and American artillery. The resulting destruction affected more than 90 percent of all educational plants.

Nor was the destruction only of the buildings. Many of the faculty were killed by the Japanese or died of disease and hardship. After Liberation the newly established Philippine Republic, being in need of highly trained men for governmental service, drew heavily from the ranks of the best educators. Simultaneously, great numbers of students of every age, long starved for education, were crowding back to school faster than roofs could be propped up to shelter them. The overcrowding in classes conducted by trained teachers rapidly reached fantastic proportions, and a sizable share of the excessive burden, especially in the lower grades, had to be turned over to people who had little more qualification for the job than the desire to receive a teacher's pay.

The Fulbright Agreement between the United States and the

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Philippines was signed in May 1948. From that time forward, the resulting program has concentrated primarily upon the rehabilitation of the school system through the training of teachers, supplemented by assistance to promising civil servants and professional people.

Thus far, thirty-five professors and teachers have been brought to the Philippines from the United States under the Fulbright Act and its supplement, the Smith-Mundt Act. Their foremost function has been to teach teachers. The host universities are encouraged to send to their classes as many members of the faculty as possible, and their other students consist mainly of future teachers and professional people.

Outside the walls of the host institution, Fulbright professors are encouraged to speak before seminars and conferences of teachers throughout the Philippines, and also to civic organizations, town gatherings, and other appropriate groups. Last year fifteen professors made a total of 234 appearances of this type, plus an unknown number which were not recorded.

Through personal contact, they provided to great numbers of Filipinos in all parts of the Republic a refreshed understanding of postwar thought—and of America. They gave an intellectual and emotional lift to teachers who seldom see a colleague from foreign lands, teachers who, because of the intellectual impoverishment left behind by the Japanese, are famished for anything indicative of what has been discovered or concluded recently in the United States and elsewhere.

Among the professors and teachers brought to the Philippines were eight in the field of vocational training, five in the natural sciences, five in the teaching of English, eight in the social sciences, three in education, three in home economics, and one each in agriculture, art, and philosophy. In addition, five of nine American graduate students who came to carry out doctoral research taught on a part-time basis.

Nor was that all. Nine of the male professors were accompanied by wives. Six of these wives taught in Philippine universities, thus adding their own contribution to that of their husbands. Among



the Fulbright men, when their gallantry slips into reverse, these teaching wives are called "Half-brights." What the teaching wife of the wag who originated that term did to him in private has not been recorded!

So great is the popularity of the Fulbright professors that they are frequently overwhelmed by invitations to honorary dinners, *bienvenidas*, *meriendas*, and home visits. The attitude toward them in virtually all parts of the Islands is one of respect and fellowship expressed in the most heartwarming and sincere forms. One Fulbright professor, it is true, while in the company of another American on a hiking expedition through the mountains in northern Luzon, was killed in a non-Christian village never visited by Americans within the memory of any living inhabitant; but it is a curious fact that he ventured into a region so remote because of having been treated with such wonderful cordiality everywhere else in the Philippines as to become convinced that he could go anywhere without danger and without need for a study of the conditions ahead of him. News of his death was received as a national calamity, and the popular reverence for other Fulbright professors increased.

Meanwhile, 119 grants have been awarded to Filipino scholars for graduate study in the United States. They came from twenty-eight Philippine colleges and attended fifty-two institutions in America. There were ninety-one teachers or educational administrators, eleven from government offices and seventeen from other professions. By the time the Fulbright program for the Philippines is completed in 1958, at least four hundred scholars will have been sent to America to round out their training.

So prized are these grants that considerable pressure is brought to bear, often from persons in high places, to secure them for relatives or friends. Indeed, the prestige attached to a Fulbright scholarship has caused several parents of wealthy students to offer to pay the entire amount of the grant in return for nomination to an award in order to get the accolade of a Fulbright label attached to the family name.

In the selection of all grantees, the merit system is, of course, scrupulously followed. Only applicants whose collegiate records

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show high scholastic attainment are called in for screening, and the nod goes to those whose records indicate a disposition to make their talents and training serve others. They are rated not only on scholarship but on how frequently they speak in public or write for publication, how varied and successful their extracurricular activities have been, and how likely they are, upon returning to the Philippines, to put their knowledge to work in ways which will manifestly serve the public interest. Since the grantees are to represent their own country, even though in an unofficial way, they are rated also on personality and social presence.

A remarkably capable group of men and women has been selected by this method. During the annual rush to secure graduate scholarships or fellowships in the United States, the Filipino Fulbright scholars have been able to compete on such favorable terms that ninety-eight of the 119 received, in addition to a Fulbright travel grant, some other form of assistance awarded on a competitive basis—in short, virtually all who applied. The great majority secured these scholarships, not through any agency, but by making direct application to the awarding universities or organizations.

For all Filipino Fulbright scholars, the trip to the United States is one of the great experiences of their lives. On the most stimulating terms they receive a rounding-out of their education together with an understanding of America such as can be gained only by personal acquaintance. In return they convey a much more intimate acquaintance with the Philippines to the Americans with whom they work and visit. They are urged to take with them photograph albums, native costumes, samples of native handicrafts—anything that will help to tell the Philippine story. They are also urged to speak frequently in public, to perform native dances, and to sing native songs as a means of communicating some feeling for Philippine life to their American acquaintances.

One of the returned grantees, a physician, writes regarding his experience: "I found that, despite the fact that we had been an American possession for fifty years and had played a vital role in the last war, wherein thousands of GI's had fought on our soil, knowledge of the Philippines was meager and confused. I dis-

covered a genuine thirst for information and a sympathetic interest in our struggles against economic and subversive ills. Questions were always asked, some on business and economic possibilities, others on the 'Huk' situation, government policies, and some even on one's own personal problems. There were even offers of intercession with official Washington for the well-being of our infant Republic, which I repeatedly classified as the only working democracy in the Far East and a typical example of unselfish American colonial policy. More invitations for talks were made than I had time to fill, but some were personal or family gestures of hospitality which I was always glad to accept."

An instructor in English from the University of the Philippines wrote what has turned out to be a fairly typical account of experiences as a student: "It is a great privilege to be a foreign student in America. One finds himself a welcome guest in the land, the center of attention—and questions. Invitations to teas, lunches, dinners, and meetings came my way. I showed off my Filipino dress, sang Philippine folk songs, and gave a few informal talks about the Philippines, its history, geography, people, languages. I also danced Filipino folk dances. For lack of any Filipino boys, two American boys obligingly clapped the bamboo poles for me when I danced the *Tinikling*."

The program of cultural exchange was also described by a supervisor of Manila schools as follows: "Americans are a very polite, understanding, and appreciative audience. I have never felt more at home and at ease in speaking before a big crowd than before an American gathering. We Filipino scholars tried our best to bring the Philippines closer to their hearts by taking with us Philippine-made products, the Filipino flag, and a big map of the Philippines. We wore our native *ternos* during our talks for a more colorful effect. They certainly appreciated our native *ternos*, for on almost all occasions they would say, 'Please wear those butterfly sleeves.' This was accompanied by an upward gesture of their arms to put more emphasis on the sleeves."

How far beyond the classroom the lessons learned in the United States might extend was indicated by an instructor from the Philip-



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pine Normal College, who wrote: "I was impressed by how hard-working the men and women were in the homes. I like the attitude of the Americans toward work—they find dignity in labor. It is not surprising to hear a professor, a dean, or a college president tell his students that he washes dishes in his home. Upon such a confession he loses no dignity or prestige. Students also can work their way through college, serving at tables in dormitories, and still retain the esteem of their fellow students and friends."

Upon returning to the Philippines, Fulbright scholars are conscious of possessing superior training and of identity with others a high percentage of whom are equipped to become nationally prominent. On November 3, 1950, they made common cause by organizing the Philippine Fulbright Scholars' Association for the purpose of promoting issues of particular concern to educators and professional people. By making strong representations to the President of the Philippines, they were instrumental in having removed all burdens of entry from the importation of texts and technical books on the ground that there is scarcely any other item so seriously needed or so closely linked to the welfare of the nation. They have established a fund from which to award scholarships to deserving high-school graduates who need assistance in securing collegiate training in Philippine universities. Among their other projects is a plan to organize hospitality for visiting scholars and educators from other nations.

They are also preparing to assist visiting scholars in carrying out their work. That can be a big job. A continuing inflow of research workers is to be encouraged by the Fulbright program because, in the world of science, the Philippines is a frontier. Last year the Cultural Branch of the American Embassy, in conjunction with the major universities, identified 131 fields of study in which publishable research, if executed with an eye to practicality, would add something substantial to the world's body of knowledge and simultaneously benefit the new Philippine Republic by revealing ways of making better use of natural and human resources.

Already six research scholars of professional rank have been brought to the Philippines for this purpose, in addition to the nine



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predoctoral research workers mentioned above. From the work of such men, as well as from that of Fulbright professors, of the "Half-brights," and of the teaching students, the program is rapidly gaining repute for its contribution to Philippine life and Philippine education. Especially has the program gained in public favor through the training of first-rate Filipinos to carry on the process of modernization which had already made remarkable advances before the war.

Like the trademark *Sterling* on silver, the name *Fulbright* has become synonymous with quality in the field of Philippine education.

## *Reflections on Signing a Teachers' Loyalty Oath*

MARJORIE BRAYMER, *Affiant*

I wish you better sleep than mine tonight, my fathers,  
Bedded in the valley of the Hudson,  
In Vermont's Green Mountains  
And the evening shadow on the slopes of Hampshire hills.  
Emigrants with printing press and psalter,  
Governors and rebels, justices,  
Teachers, lawyers, poets, fiddlers, merchants,  
Sleep well.

I bid you good good night, my grandfather,  
Bound out at twelve for store-bought shoes and bread  
To do a man's work on the farm  
Whose fields still stank of crops burned black  
By armies in a hurry going south.  
Sleep well, sleep better than you slept the nights  
You, fugitive, crept north in your white skin along the roads  
The blacks had gone not long before  
To teach yourself to read, to spell, to cipher,  
And to use a birch on boys who would not learn  
Because they never felt the lash that left its weals on you.  
Bond boy, sleep well.

A dreamless sleep to grandmother,  
Ahead of you by not too many years,  
Who set her face against the backward look  
When she was sick with want of home.

The sack of seed rode safely;  
The child was twice as heavy as the rifle,  
And she taught herself to carry one in either arm.

Good night to you good citizens my ancestors  
Wherever east or west your bones came down.  
May sleep be easier  
Now that our family name has been inscribed  
Not perishably in furrows to grow corn  
Nor transiently in rafters of the prairie schoolhouse  
And not contingently in tracks of wagons grinding west  
Nor yet provisionally in shaping basic law  
And hopes hard held to,  
But perdurably:  
In ink, and with an oath.

# DOS PASSOS AND THE RUINED WORDS

JOHN DOS PASSOS does himself a disservice in reprinting his last three novels as *District of Columbia*, a trilogy scheduled to appear in August. It is true that his powerful *U.S.A.* also was a trilogy and that it gained strength when the component parts were bound together. But between the books included in *U.S.A.* and those now brought together in *District of Columbia* there is really no parallel. The novels in *U.S.A.* compose Dos Passos' masterwork, his bleak epic of industrial America. Despite its self-imposed limitations it will survive as both a great social document and a work of art, repellent but fascinating in its passionate indictment of capitalism at its height. As footnotes to *U.S.A.* the succeeding novels were interesting and pertinent, despite their thinness and their febrile tone. But when put together their individual inadequacies, like echoes in the mountains, augment rather than neutralize each other. Instead of making an imposing mural, as does *U.S.A.*, *District of Columbia* merely consists of three line drawings, at places fine in detail, but lacking unity, depth, or credibility.

*Adventures of a Young Man* (1939) is the story of Glenn Spotswood, the sensitive son of a college

teacher fired for opposing United States entry into World War I. Glenn is caught up in radical circles in his college days and soon finds himself working with the Communist party to help the "toiling masses" with whom he feels impelled to identify himself. Disillusion follows; he breaks with the party but tries vainly to continue the good work alone, until in desperation he volunteers to fight for loyalist Spain, where the long arm of the party finally reaches out to liquidate him as a deviationist and hence an enemy. Apparently Dos Passos is primarily concerned with unclocking the Communist party, showing something of the intellectual atmosphere that could suck the unsuspecting youngster into it, and suggesting that the conscientious individual must somehow attempt to keep up the good fight even though there seems no way to do so.

*Number One* (1943) introduces us to Chuck Crawford, a simplified Huey Long, through Glenn's disolute older brother, Tyler, who is acting as Chuck's personal secretary. Chuck participates in a variety of shenanigans revealing the corruption of the modern demagogue. When he finally throws Tyler to the reform wolves to save his own skin, Tyler ruefully decides that it would be no good to turn on his betrayer, how-



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ever worthy a public enterprise the removal of Chuck's lambskin might be, because reform must start at home, with himself and all the other number ones who betray democracy by letting the self-styled Number Ones represent them.

*The Grand Design* (1949) lays bare an elaborate cross section of Washington life from 1933 to 1943. It shows the near-suffocation of New Deal ideals by bureaucratic red tape and personal ambitions, and their final strangling by businessmen and former idealists during the war effort—and throughout everything, the Communists, hiding in desk drawers or rigging phony protest demonstrations. The frustration of conscientious men who turn administrators is illustrated by the fruitless success of Millard Carroll (ex-businessman) and Paul Graves (ex-scientist-farmer), who leave their practical callings to answer what they consider their country's call. This book is more ambitious and less easy to summarize than the others.

In both trilogies the technique is strictly naturalistic, but the results differ as much as they would if a chisel were used to make both a statue and an etching. In *U.S.A.* the characters are presented to us as objects, never as subjects, their activities chronicled as by a scrupulous reporter, and their thoughts and feelings recorded as by a dictaphone fixing the comments of a patient

under hypnosis. Any given section of a novel is presented from a single point of view. Although we are within the individual's consciousness, it is a rudimentary consciousness aware largely of the externals of its physical and human environment, possessing only the barest and simplest subjective feelings about the experiences through which it is passing, occasionally claiming to make choices, though to the reader the choices are transparently illusions. The most obvious characteristic of the narratives is their speed. Events are often sketched in bare summary, juxtaposed one to another without transitions, because the essence of the Dos Passos character is that things happen *to* him as he moves automatonlike through a flux of chance events. We have no characters in the usual sense of the word. We do not know and feel and care about Mac or Joe Williams or Margo Dowling as we do about characters in most novels—even other naturalistic novels. Individuals have been abolished; only the social organism remains.

This abolition of the individual defines one of the peculiar limitations Dos Passos consciously imposed on *U.S.A.* Seeking above all to show what society did to people, Dos Passos intentionally prevented the reader from identifying himself with his characters so that the characters would appear as objects, social ani-

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imals, flotsam in the American tides. To the extent that they are human beings, as of course they are, they are little people, lost, barely conscious of their relation or lack of relation to society, pushed helpless here and there by impersonal forces. All are nameless and faceless, and therein representative of the other uncounted nameless ones. From the congeries of anonymous and unmemorable characters arises an unforgettable picture of a social machine. It is a machine by virtue of its inexorability. It is even more like the scientist's atom, composed of electrons individually unpredictable and unrelated in their haphazard flight, but certain, statistically, to make their atoms react predictably.

The technique of *U.S.A.* is impeccably designed and executed to convey precisely the desired impression. In *District of Columbia*, with minor modifications, the narrative technique is the same. But what is appropriate in the early novels proves inappropriate in the later, where Dos Passos is expressly concerned with the moral problems of men who do make choices. In these later books he attempts to do two things at once: continue his pure naturalism, and involve his characters in dilemmas which force them to act as moral men. Since the two purposes are antithetical, he fulfills neither satisfactorily. He undercuts the naturalism, and short-circuits the moral consideration. As a result, whereas *U.S.A.* leaves an unequivocal effect, *District of Columbia* is equivocal

throughout. It is as though Dos Passos felt impelled to face the refractory problems of responsibility in our society, but was unwilling or unable to come to grips with them, and could only suggest complexities he could not develop. In terms that though too neat are yet broadly correct and suggestive, we can say that *U.S.A.* is rigidly amoral in form, but moral in its impress; *District of Columbia* is explicitly moral in many of its concerns, but amoral in its total effect.

Many of the ambiguities of *District of Columbia* result from Dos Passos' conception and handling of his chief characters. He conceives of them as nonnaturalistic, but develops them naturalistically. His people are meant to be subjects rather than objects, leaders rather than followers, moral agents instead of mere social animals. But we are never quite sure how to view them.

The first confusion appears quite simply in the structural difference between the *U.S.A.* novels and the first two of this trilogy. Each of these two is told from the point of view of a single character, so that their very form tends to make us identify with the man chosen as dramatic center. Indeed, Glenn is almost the conventional hero, in so far as we follow him from childhood, through his education, his loves, and his struggle to find a place in the world, to his tragic death. Although naturalistic novels aplenty have single protagonists, these are usually helpless individuals, objects molded and victimized by so-

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ciety—recall, for example, such different naturalistic protagonists as McTeague or Clyde Griffiths or Studs Lonigan. Glenn and Tyler, and also Paul Graves and Millard Carroll, are shown to us less as products of their society than as individuals undergoing particular experiences, and we are asked to enter into them and participate in their subjective concerns. And yet almost at the moment that Dos Passos invites us to feel them as subjects, he pushes us back to where we can only observe them as objects moving on the plane of behavioristic responses.

Equally frustrating is the way in which Dos Passos posits Carroll and Graves, and to a lesser extent Glenn, as leaders rather than followers, as men who make things happen instead of merely having things happen to them. Then instead of developing them accordingly, he shows them to us largely as passive figures in a pageant. This can be seen most clearly in Millard Carroll. *The Grand Design* opens with Carroll's decision to leave his business and go to Washington to help in the great cause of the New Deal. He is a man of determination and ideals. But for all his hard work and integrity and the position of great responsibility he finally attains, he gradually dissolves into the anonymity of futile bureaucracy. Dos Passos might, of course, have deliberately chosen to write a naturalistic story of the erosion of good intentions in administrative Washington. But that intent is belied by the way in which he

made Carroll the one person whom we consistently respect. Or he might have used Carroll—but didn't—to illustrate a meaningful struggle of the man of good will in the labyrinths of Washington. As it is, Carroll simply ends up a man of distinction.

Dos Passos' uncertainty about what he was doing is most serious in his treatment of the characters as moral agents. The heart of *Number One* is Tyler's moral decision: without that the novel is mere skin and bones, beautifully modeled but not viable. As it is, it is still lifeless. Its heart refuses to beat because nothing we have been told of Tyler makes his choice meaningful. He has been consistently shown without any social philosophy or conscience. The occasional twinges of his personal conscience have been largely referred pains from his ulcers. He could convincingly have simply become fed up with the whole business and decided that in his vitiated condition nothing was worth bothering about. That would have provided a consistent naturalistic conclusion to a naturalistic story. But the high moral tone in which he decides not to disclose Chuck's perfidies makes no sense in its context and comes close to making nonsense of the book. Dos Passos has something positive to say, but he merely pastes his moral on to the end of a story of brilliantly cut surfaces, leaving us as frustrated and dissatis-



fied with his tale as we are with the alcoholic Tyler.

Glenn is much more of a person. The essence of his story lies first in his concern with the social responsibility, effectiveness, and morality of the American Communist party, and, once he has rejected the party, in his need to find a way to carry out his humanitarian ideals in practice. Certainly Dos Passos felt those concerns deeply and wished to convey his feeling to us. But there is no depth to his treatment of the party or his development of Glenn. He merely skirts the host of complex problems. Although he grants Glenn a relatively mature conscience, he makes Glenn's consciousness, through which the entire story comes to us, as rudimentary as that of the normal Dos Passos creature. The antagonists he gives Glenn are simple to the point of being caricatures. And he tells the story by means of the same rapid narrative and successive jolts that he uses to show Ben Compton and Mary French swept along in radical movements. As a result, the moral aspects of the book are aborted, leaving us with the sort of external view that was superb in *U.S.A.*, but here proves inappropriate.

The failure of the *District of Columbia* novels to achieve their purposes is apparent also in the supplementary technical devices. The daring experiments of *U.S.A.* prove effective as means of deepening the significance of the bare narratives. The Portraits and Newsreels give

solidity to the ghostlike figures. The poetic sensibility of the Camera Eye gives a subjective dimension to the antiseptic objectivity of the protagonists' activities. Thus the cold fictions take on reality—historical and subjective.

The thin devices of *Number One* and *The Grand Design* operate in the opposite way. Here it is the narratives which pretend to reality by containing semihistorical characters, and to subjective meaning by virtue of their moral dilemmas. The italicized intersections seem intended to counterpoint the activities of the quasi-real persons of the narratives with the activities of the true number ones, Americans in general. The stories reveal selfishness, intrigue, and betrayal, while in the interpolations the "people" are shown plodding through their practical daily activities, sometimes ignorant or confused, but the real source of an American decency and wholeness lacking in the fictional characters. This is, of course, gross sentimentalism. In essence, Dos Passos is transplanting his Joe Williamses from the *U.S.A.* narratives into these interpolations and treating them as the fount of all virtue. The style mirrors the content—factitiously "modern," trite, almost a weak parody of the brilliant sharpness of the analogous *U.S.A.* passages. In both trilogies the interpolations are meant to generalize and add significance to the story proper, but with quite different effects: in *U.S.A.* the narrative figures are related to their times



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by Dos Passos' skillful portrayal of specific, named men and events, with the effect of increasing the credibility and deepening the meaning; in *District of Columbia* the watery stories are diluted further by loosely related, general descriptions of some "common man."

This discussion of the technical aspects of the trilogies can perhaps be summed up by suggesting that *U.S.A.* is history in the guise of fiction, *District of Columbia* fiction in the guise of history. The characters of *U.S.A.* are creations of Dos Passos' imagination. No one looks upon those novels as *romans à clef*, and with the notable exception of the Sacco-Vanzetti case (significantly undisguised) one finds few historical events presented in the narrative sections. But as Dos Passos' creatures play their petty, harried dramas against the huge backdrop of historical realities, they give us a feeling of the life of the times. In almost perfect contrast, the characters of *District of Columbia* beg to be identified with historical personages, and the events remind us directly of actual happenings. This tendency increases steadily to *The Grand Design*, a book which often sounds less like fiction than like a journalist's thinly cloaked revelation of Washington life. The technical contradictions and confusions of *District of Columbia* prevent us from *feeling* it as truth, in either sense. We don't participate in an imaginatively conceived drama; we don't find a representative cross

section of America laid open for our inspection; we get at best a simulacrum of some of the historical events of the period told without the insight, sympathy, or vital indignation which could make us respond to them as fiction.

II

Thus far we have considered primarily some of the technical reasons why Dos Passos' second trilogy fails to convince. A more vital query remains: why did the writer who had shown such masterly control in *U.S.A.* suddenly lose his power? No one except Dos Passos himself can answer conclusively, if indeed even he can. But an analysis of the mood of these novels can at least give us some hints.

A standard observation about the early Dos Passos was that while he was probably the most sensitive of the young writers of the 'twenties, his fiction was harder and grimmer than any of the others'. He was by instinct a poet. After the horrors of the war and the trauma of the peace, he wandered with the other sad young artists through Spain, eulogizing its preindustrial life in *Rosinante to the Road Again*, in which he sought to fix the gestures that gave his beloved Spanish their dignity and romance. In returning to his country to share the fate of his countrymen and help them recover their integrity and their conscience,

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he suppressed his most real self, the man of sensibility who wrote the prose poems prefacing the various sections of *Manhattan Transfer* and the Camera Eyes of *U.S.A.* Instead of denying responsibility by attempting to escape in Paris bistros or on the sands of the Riviera, he immersed himself in the destructive element and strove by thus losing his life to find it.

The Camera Eyes flanking the fictionalized account of the last hectic efforts to save Sacco and Vanzetti make explicit Dos Passos' passionate feelings about America. "How make them feel who are your oppressors, America," he asks. And answers: "rebuild the ruined words worn slimy in the mouths of lawyers districtattorneys collegepresidents judges." Finally, after the execution, he concludes: "all right we are two nations," "we stand defeated America." The note is one of resignation, even despair.

But bitter as it is, the total effect of *U.S.A.* is not one of emptiness or hopelessness. The criticism is criticism rather than cynicism. Beneath Dos Passos' loathing of the dehumanizing consequences of the capitalist ethos lies his hope that something can be saved, that the ruined democratic words can be rebuilt and the promises of America fulfilled. Alienated from America of the 'twenties like so many of his fellow writers, he yet held fast to the older Jeffersonian dreams when he wrote *U.S.A.* But the succeeding novels reveal a series of progressive aliena-

tions from himself and all that had nourished him before. In *U.S.A.* he spews out materialist America; here he spews out the idealists and reformers who sought to save his country.

We might have expected his novels after *U.S.A.* to show a renewed hope, a rebuilding of the ruined words. Instead they are futility and frustration compounded, criticism turned to cynicism. From the thunderous dangers of the living Sierras, we are dropped into the salt wastes of a sterile Death Valley. The dreariness of the mood deepens from novel to novel. The words once ruined by the oppressors of America are now parodied and betrayed by those who pretended to revive them.

*District of Columbia* was clearly not planned as a trilogy, nor did it grow organically as *U.S.A.* seems to have done. It is a series of spasmodic retchings, indicating that Dos Passos' purgation in *U.S.A.* had brought him not health but a ruined stomach. Thereby the trilogy attains a sort of macabre unity. The Spotswoods—who provide the formal unity, such as it is—also supply the substantive unity. Each is a bit of the old idealistic Dos Passos, swallowed and regurgitated, almost compulsively.

Glenn, of all the Spotswoods, is most obviously a piece of Dos Passos. His milieu is the radical fringe of academic life, and then the periphery of the Communist party. His experiences are at several points so close to those of Dos Passos himself—for example, the work with the

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C.P. miners' union in Harlan County, the tragi-farce of the Madison Square Garden protest over Dol-fuss' shooting of the Viennese socialist workers—that we cannot doubt that these are the adventures of Dos Passos the fellow traveler. A good friend of Dos Passos' was murdered, like Glenn, by the Communists while fighting for the Spanish loyalists. Probably Glenn's break with the party and his frightful isolation as a declassed and departed man are patterned on treatment Dos Passos himself received (although he was never an actual member). But, as we have seen, the naturalistic presentation keeps us always at arm's length, apparently because Dos Passos was psychologically unable to enter deeply into his own experiences. Compelled to drag out his past, he can present it only as a puppet show.

Glenn's adventures are not adventures in ideas or understanding but in words: the pseudo-Freudian, pseudo-Marxian clichés of academic intellectuals, the Stalinist slogans of the comrades. These were for a while the fresh new words with which Dos Passos hoped to revitalize the old words. But having rejected them after once believing, he can only parody them now. Sometimes there is an infectious zest in his reproduction of the glib Marxist formulas. Gladys Spingarn, for example, is both true and amusing. But more often his disgust turns the comrades into sheer caricatures. He refuses to permit anyone to talk except in stereotypes, and as a result

the unusual amount of dialogue in the book accentuates its emptiness. It could have been brought to life only if Glenn had been permitted to transcend the clichés, at least when he makes his crucial decisions. But his stream of consciousness is as elementary and stereotyped as the talk at sophisticated parties, so that the phrases in which he thinks make it impossible for us to believe in him, inside or outside the party. Dos Passos was rejecting himself, almost with loathing, carefully avoiding the unstereotyped words which might have explained Glenn's intellectual conversions, coldly eschewing the passion that could have made the experiences morally or emotionally meaningful.

Where Glenn's relationship to Dos Passos is direct to the degree of being transparent, Tyler's in *Number One*, is indirect and ambiguous. *Number One* is in some ways a throwback to *U.S.A.*, especially in its depiction of Chuck Crawford, the modern demagogue who manipulates the democratic words with a bravura cynicism, cuts himself and his cronies into the black gold, and piously offers up his aides as sacrifices to political reform when his opponents turn his words against him. There is a vitality reminiscent of *U.S.A.* in Dos Passos' depiction of Chuck, a political counterpart of Moorehouse. But it is Tyler rather than the healthy and despicable Chuck who is, as dra-



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matic center of the story, formally assigned the most significant role. One wonders at first why Dos Passos' fullest account of practical politics had to be filtered through the alcoholic consciousness of a moral infant. Then we realize that though he felt compelled to face it, he could do so only in the person of someone like Tyler. He could stomach his material only by resorting to the bed and the bottle—those symbols of compulsive escapes from freedom that he had used throughout *U.S.A.* Tyler is not a rejected part of Dos Passos in the same way as the other Spotswoods; but his nausea and ultimate impotence are certainly those of his creator.

It is significant that the clearest statement of Dos Passos' positive message is found amid the misery of *Number One*. It appears first in the letter delivered to Tyler near the end of the book. Here, the Glenn that is Dos Passos at his best forsakes his customary clichés to appeal for intelligence, good will, and conscientious action. For the only time in these novels, now that Glenn is dead, Dos Passos brings himself to express a hope that the ruined words can be rebuilt. But he can only drop the hopeful words ironically into Tyler's hip pocket. Then Tyler, probably the weakest character in all six novels, presents the message dramatically. He refuses to turn state's evidence on Chuck because reform must begin with himself, *Number One*. In acting out the embryonic ritual of reform he significantly

relies on a sock at Ed James's jaw; fists speak less ambiguously than words. The decision is fine, but unconvincing. And the Tyler who is dropped into a few scenes of *The Grand Design*, suddenly drunk or jittering on a temporary wagon, is clearly not expected to strengthen the effect of *Number One's* message.

*The Grand Design* completes Dos Passos' repudiation of his past, as he shows the moderate reformism of the New Deal to be for him as indigestible as his earlier radicalisms. Though Herbert Spotswood is not the center of this centerless novel as his sons had been of the preceding books, he is an important character, and the treatment of him is symptomatic of Dos Passos' attitude toward his material. In *Adventures of a Young Man* the father is rejected by his sons, as by his society—though for quite different reasons. Dos Passos depicts him in his family circles as fussy, self-righteous, self-pitying, and physically repulsive, thus providing a ready-made explanation for the sons' subsequent repudiation of orthodox authority and their search for a substitute. Society disapproves of him for his ideas rather than his personality, for opposing America's entry into World War I. This linking of the repulsive father image with opposition to American participation in the war gives the first, startling indication of the change in Dos Passos. In thus rejecting Herbert Spotswood, he is recanting, renouncing some of the words that had formerly given him



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most sustenance. This is a clear reversal of *U.S.A.*, where opponents of our first World War—like Debs and Bourne of the historical characters, and Ben Compton of the fictional—were among the few heroes.

Though Spotswood is more important in *The Grand Design* than in the earlier novel, he still remains only one unsavory part of the sad scene. Again his words are the words to which Dos Passos must, at the time they were used, have given allegiance; the democratic rhetoric of anti-Fascism. Again they are repudiated, as they are mouthed unctuously and platitudinously by Spotswood, who after years of neglect as a pallid do-gooder has become an overnight success by virtue of his meticulously rehearsed, confidentially whispered broadcasts. Spotswood the news analyst is caricature, and an amazingly obvious caricature at that. Like Glenn, he is a part of Dos Passos, cast off now as sickening.

One of the book's most noticeable features is the emptiness of the characters' talk. Whether this was part of the author's flat design is hard to tell. Certainly the dialogue reflects effectively the lassitude which Dos Passos apparently felt when he portrayed his New Deal actors. The words are not so much perverted here as soured and drained of all sense. Though many of his characters are leaders in formulating government policy, they all suffer from the sort of enervation shown in Walker Watson, Dos Passos' bilious

travesty of the worst of Hopkins and Wallace. Even where ostensibly weighing serious alternatives of government policy, they can express themselves only in absurd set speeches brimming with liberal shibboleths. We can't take his New Dealers seriously even as villains.

The single ray of hope in the book, and indeed the whole trilogy, comes from Paul Graves, who perhaps represents the tinge of positive feeling left in Dos Passos. In *Adventures of a Young Man*, Paul is to Glenn a sort of older brother and half-accepted father substitute. Whenever Paul appears he brings a breath of sanity and healthy simplicity. Living not with words but with a wife and children, and having a farmer's and technician's love of concrete things, he has no more faith in idealistic panaceas than in American capitalism, and his clear eyes show him the truth about Russia that the familiar slogans hide from others. He is sensitive without being sentimental, has ideals without being idealistic, can see the bad without being engulfed by it, and can find and enjoy the good in life.

Dos Passos might have been expected to resign from the Spotswood family and join the Graveses. Paul is probably the most sympathetic character in the trilogy. (Millard Carroll is treated with respect, almost awe; but he is pure pasteboard.) Yet Paul is a failure—in

## DOS PASSOS AND THE RUINED WORDS

two senses: Dos Passos shows, intentionally, that Paul can not be useful in Washington; and he fails, unintentionally, to make Paul and Paul's dilemmas convincing.

Paul is unsuccessful in Washington because, as Dos Passos sees it, bureaucratic Washington cripples all those who stubbornly insist that the goal of their activity is to improve the lot of the people. Here lay the problem closest to Dos Passos' heart, which, if worked out satisfactorily, could have made sense out of the book. Dos Passos' real concern on this score appears explicitly in *State of the Nation*, where his Washington sections center about this question of the responsibility and effectiveness of administrative machinery. Like Dos Passos, Paul is convinced that reforms cannot be imposed from above, that one must be ever alert against the tendency to forget that it is from the workers and farmers of the nation that the government receives its authority, that their welfare provides its very excuse for being. Government is justified only if it keeps close to the people, refuses to manipulate them as objects, and realizes that they are subjects who make their own lives, with whatever aid and guidance administrative agencies can provide. Here Dos Passos approached one of the central problems of political democracy today, one in which he had a deeply felt concern.

But just as he is unable to make Glenn's experiences or Tyler's moral decision seem significant, so here he

refuses to treat Paul really seriously. Instead of giving Paul's problems the space they deserve he turns quickly from their nutritious possibilities to the revolting Walker Watson or the Communists' sinister confidence games. More important—and this is congruent with his other failure—he gives us an ambiguous picture of Paul. Paul is the strong, silent man, properly suspicious of the fond promises implied in the words of his new trade; in the field he listens instead of talking, and he is at his worst amid the words of Washington. But like the others he is depicted as incapable of purposive action, unable to do anything but passively undergo disillusioning experiences as he is slowly jogged up the bureaucratic ladder. Then, as if to make doubly sure that we do not find Paul a proper spokesman for Dos Passos, he pushes him into the affair with Gloria that results in her suicide. In the end Paul is deprived of the authority he might possibly have attained. Once more Dos Passos had to destroy the bit of himself that he had almost created positively and favorably.

### III

I do not want to leave the impression that the *District of Columbia* novels are without value. They can be read with profit and enjoyment—once. But they are by Dos Passos, not just anyone, and we have to judge them in the light of *U.S.A.* and their author's reception in the

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'thirties as one of America's greats.

Their weakness is, I am convinced, not merely the result of the subjective judgment we make in one decade of works written in the spirit of a totally different time. Indeed, their problems are as alive today as they ever were—but the books are not. In contrast, *U.S.A.* still lives; when we reread it, it has most of its old force. The trouble is that Dos Passos got stuck in ruts of his own making: he couldn't change his technique when it no longer suited his changed purposes; and he couldn't forsake his old material after it had become so distasteful that he could no longer use it creatively. The sensitive poet had with gritted teeth turned his disgust into art in *U.S.A.* But as his alienation from his material deepened and turned partly into an alienation from his old self, further work in the same vein could result only in imaginative failure.

We have always known that despite his brief flirtation with Marxism, Dos Passos was at heart an anarchist. As such he was admirably suited to expose the evils of his society, but unfit to cope sympathetically with attempts to reform it. The old Dos Passos glints through the later novels only when he can escape society by writing of nature, or of men in simple, asocial situations. Many of his descriptions of the country or the weather or Washing-

ton in the summer have the evocative power of his writing in *U.S.A.* The dramatic scenes that stick in our mind, on the other hand, are few: Glenn on an overnight with Paul at a boys' camp; Glenn as harvest hand (the old romantic wobbly in Dos Passos); Millard and Lucile Carroll enjoying the countryside on their initial drive to Washington.

Above all, there is Paul's stop at an isolated Nebraska farm, where he covers himself with blood and sweat aiding the farmer to pull a calf, and afterwards, exhausted and dripping, sits with bare chest and feet and with a jug at his elbow, straining to best the man at arm-wrestling. This picture of men divested of the amenities of civilization, enraging in simple, nonverbal occupations, awakens the emotional response Dos Passos fails to elicit elsewhere in the tedious, plodding narratives. This is the material that he seems now able to work with, not the shards of his old social activism, which do not nourish him as an artist. Long ago, in explaining the decline of Baroja, his favorite Spanish novelist, he characterized Baroja's later novels in words prophetically appropriate to his own; they were, he said, "the meditations of a disenchanting revolutionist."



# RETURN TO FRANCE

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by Lawrence Clark Powell

**T**HAT I, not the city, had changed was my fear, so that I put off from week to month the short trip from London to Paris, and might never have gone had it not been for the university mission which required my presence in Nice. Even then I considered flying directly from England to the Riviera, went to the Air France office in the Haymarket, and got everything but an actual reservation. We all know that Paris is probably the only feminine being to grow more beautiful with age, and now on the eve of her bimillennium, it is as true as ever that "age cannot wither her nor custom stale her infinite variety." Of no man can this be said.

I had left her last in May, nearly twenty years ago, on a vernal day when the chestnuts in the Luxembourg Gardens burned with candleblooms, and the lovers and children, the geese and the sailboats, statues and puppet show, all went merry-go-round in my fancy. On the night before, I had walked for miles under a full moon, through a love-memored, music-ringing city, saying to myself, This is the Paris I will remember!

Yet *on revient toujours à son premier amour*. And so it was that I found myself walking the boat deck of the *Invicta*, half-regretfully watching the Dover cliffs disappear and the drab port of Calais draw near; for once landed on French soil there is no avoiding Paris: all roads in France are magnetized by the capital at their hub.

Four hours nonstop via Amiens, and the "Flèche d'Or" arrived at Gare du Nord at six o'clock in the evening, where the usual confusion of a French railway station had increased to maelstrom at the rush hour. Eventually a taxi got me across town and river to the Place Saint Germain-des-Prés and the small hotel where Ward Ritchie and I had roomed together years ago, each engaged upon a "masterpiece," his in verse, mine in prose. The Place, the quarter,



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the hotel itself were unchanged by Occupation, Liberation, and the tides of tourism which reached a new high in 1950. Church, kiosk, and *pissoir*, bus stop and subway burrow, flower barrow, oyster and snail stand, and—glory be!—the vendor of hot roasted chestnuts, all were as before. Only the hotel proprietor was gone—retired to a little piece of land in the country, his successor told me.

True, the quarter was noisier, for in the two decades the center of Bohemia had shifted from Montparnasse to Saint-Germain, and in the Café des Deux Magots and the Café de Flore, a few doors from the small hotel, Sartre and his troop of Existentialists had headquartered. Now they had evacuated to some other quarter, shaking off their parasites; and only the abandoned camp followers remained, making the nights raucous with their chatter. One night, nearer dawn than midnight, a stentorian troubadour stood on the street corner and declaimed his work-in-progress, while up some alley an old wino heckled him and called hoarsely for drink.

Across the boulevard the Brasserie Lipp still featured Alsatian specialties and short-orders at all hours. I remember freshly boiled potatoes with sweet butter, a *choucroute* garnished with frankfurters actually from Frankfort, and a salad of beets and watercress, almost too beautiful to eat.

Only a few steps from the quarter were such fabulous backwaters as the Place Furstembourg where Delacroix had his studio. Verlaine's café haunt was near by. The Street of the Fishing Cat. Elliot Paul's Rue Huchette. A tiny café where one can bring his own food and order wine. The museum of the Faculty of Medicine, where in jars of alcohol serenely float the freaks of several centuries. The Sorbonne. The Panthéon. And the Luxembourg Gardens, now winter blue, bare and bleak. For my first meal I returned sentimentally to the restaurant where I had eaten my last—the Voltaire in the Place de l'Odéon—and ordered the identical dishes. They were as good as I remembered—though more than twice as high—and were served by the same waiter, grown older and slower, even as I. The outside walls of the building bore marks of the fighting that had raged in the quarter. Those vestiges, and plaques through-

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out the city to mark where young patriots had fallen in the Liberation, were the only outward signs of the Occupation.

Two canyonlike streets—Rue Bonaparte and Rue des Saint-Pères—drained the quarter and debouched onto the riverbank; streets lined with bookshops and antique stores, few of which I patronized because of tenacious proprietors and grotesque prices. Now, as then, I found loveliest of the city's beauties the River Seine, flowing rain-full and urgent down past Rouen to the Atlantic. On that first blue-gray morning of my return I stood on the Pont du Carrousel and took my bearings up and down stream, across to the long, low treasury of the Louvre, packed with poorly hung art and grumpy guards, and back to the high houses of the Left Bank; downstream to the Eiffel Tower, upstream to the towers and the spire of Notre Dame; while to the accompaniment of horn-happy traffic and the hooting of river craft, my fear flowed away with the water, and I recaptured the joy I had known when on a moon-bright May night I last stood on that bridge.

Since then I had come to be increasingly fond of the poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire, and again it was his bridge poem, "Le Pont Mirabeau," that filled my mind with its music.

Sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine  
Et nos amours  
Faut-il qu'il m'en souvienne  
La joie venait toujours après la peine.

And I thought that this poet, who died from the war just before Armistice Day in 1918, has become to the twentieth century as symbolic as Baudelaire is to the nineteenth, Villon to the fifteenth. All three, as well as Rimbaud and Rabelais, yes and Henry Miller and Ward Ritchie himself, stood beside me on the bridge, in timeless and eternal solidarity.

In spite of the cold the bookstalls were open, and I dredged upstream, searching vainly for a buy such as I had once made of Mary Austin's *The Lands of the Sun*. Even at high noon, the interior of Notre Dame was dark as the pit, and bitter cold. The great win-

dows smoldered with blue and red and purple fire, emitting only spiritual heat.

It was Sunday and in the Place near by the daily Marché aux Fleurs had given way to the weekly Marché aux Oiseaux, and I found it lined with caged birds of all feathers, except tropical, uttering small chirps in the chill air. There were abundant displays of bird food, of seeds and grains in sacks and tins, heaped and spilling. I bought a cornucopia of yellow corns just to empty into my pocket and run my fingers through, Midas-like, and later feed to the pigeons.

And so I returned to the French rhythm, understanding and being understood, not utterly a foreigner, while the days were passed in eating, walking and window-shopping, eating and museums and bookshops, and eating; and nights at the opera, the ballet, at chamber music, the mammiferous Folies Bergères and the zither-haunted cinema, *The Third Man*, and another called *Alexander Nevsky*, masterpiece of the late Sergei Eisenstein, a pageant of epic scenes, like a medieval tapestry come to life, with a musical score by Prokofiev, so powerful, evocative, and moving.

Rain was falling the evening I taxied to the Gare de Lyon to take the Blue Train on its overnight run to Nice, a cold, wind-driven rain that swept the sidewalks clean of people, but did not hide the floodlit Cathedral of Our Lady, thrusting heavenward her huge yet graceful bulk. Three hours later and two hundred miles distant the train made its first stop at Dijon, a brief halt to change from electric to steam engine. I raised the blind and peered out on the platform where I used to come at midnight for the simple joy of watching the trains of the Compagnie Internationale des Wagon-Lits et Grands Express Européens, led by the Blue and followed in quick succession by the Simplon-Orient and the Rome, pass through Dijon on their way south and east.

Now I was a passenger *de luxe*, looking in vain for some sleepless student to wave me on my way, as once I had waved to a passenger who lifted a blind and looked out. Smoothly the train started again with a single whistle yelp, rolled through the yards, gathered speed



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over the Canal of Burgundy and past the Swiss junction, hurrying faster and faster down the bare-vined Côte d'Or toward the valley of the Rhone, funneling willy-nilly to the Mediterranean basin and its Côte d'Azur.

Rain fell during much of the week I was in Nice, turning the Blue Coast to gray; a warm, windless rain that did not keep me from re-discovering old haunts on foot and by autobus. After years of drought in southern California my soul was parched for rain. I stood heedlessly in it on the quayside of Nice's *vieux port* and watched the semiweekly Corsica steamer, *Ville d'Ajaccio*, loading slings of cabbages and cauliflowers, while at the next berth sailors listlessly repaired a wretched submarine, on the conning tower of which someone had chalked a hammer and sickle. A wall plaque marked the birthplace of Garibaldi. The ubiquitous French fisherman trailed his line and caught nothing.

In an *épicerie* I bought Algerian dates, Dijon gingerbread and mustard, butter biscuits from Nantes, English glacier mints, and a bottle of Remi Martin. As in most small shops in France, the dry groceries were beautifully displayed. I expressed admiration to the proprietor. He beamed. We talked. His name was Georges Chamaillard, aged about fifty, native of the Ardennes, resident of Nice for twenty-five years, judge one day a week at the Tribunal de Commerce, alert and intelligent within the area circumscribed by his prejudices. I asked him about the Occupation at Nice. "The Germans made no trouble," he said. "It was the Italians who were insufferable. Straw men in peacock feathers!" Our conversation ended, as all conversations do today, on the "next war." He was positive that all men of good will have but a single enemy. "*Ah les sacrés Russes! Il faut les battre!*" We exchanged cards and I left him in his packaged world.

Along the Promenade des Anglais I walked westward (in time for the afternoon session of the International Universities Conference sponsored by UNESCO) to the Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen, founded in 1937 by Paul Valéry. In the forecourt, Maillol's lovely limestone nude drank rain through all her pores. I heard fine



speeches and lively discussion, as brave things were said by academicians from many countries, save for the Soviet Union. The Russians were invited to attend the conference but did not reply. The Poles and the Czechs sent regrets. The Yugoslavs came in force.

One morning I rode an autobus through rain-washed heathery hills to the perfume town of Grasse, birthplace of Fragonard. At the perfumery named for him, I heard a sloe-eyed guide spice her spiel with GI slang. Facts filled the air. *So delicate are tube roses that essence can be extracted only by placing them on beds of cold fat. Girls entrusted with this delicate task are enjoined from eating garlic, so absorbent is the fatty medium. If all the rose petals used to make an ounce of essential oil were strewn through the streets . . . Lavender blossoms are harvested only in the hour before sunrise. The local birthrate reaches a peak nine months after blossom time.*

The bus ran swiftly to the sea, through groves of cork oak, olive, and mimosa. In Cannes I rested in a café on the quay. Delicately the winter-moored yachts penciled with their masts on the slaty sky.

Another day I trudged up the winding street to the tiptop of Cagnes-sur-Mer, the ancient hill town celebrated by poets from Marcus Fabius Quintilianus to Carlyle Ferren McIntyre. Here the aged Renoir painted with brush tied to his arthritic hand. I thought affectionately of them all, as I looked inland to butte-sheltered Vence (Ventium Caesaris) where Lawrence died, and beyond to the snowy Maritime Alps which wall out the northern winter.

In Monaco the Prince served the delegates a luncheon splendid enough to sustain one through many a dreary English meal. Remembering my ill-fortune of years before, I spurned the Casino for the Prince's equally famed Oceanographic Institute. Horrors of the aquarium! Armored sea turtles from Melville's Encantadas. Spiky Crustacea. Wolf fish. Eels.

Six blue busses bore us land mammals back to Nice. From the Middle Corniche road at sundown the city lights glittered like mica.

On the day before my return to England I went to Villefranche and lunched at a small restaurant on the water front. American sailors were launching ashore from the cruiser *New Jersey*. By the

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time they re-embarked many a local nest would be refeathered. I ate a bouillabaisse which nearly took off under power of its garlic, then soothed my palate on a salad of a little green plant resembling dandelion. Upon inquiring for the writer Blaise Cendrars, I learned that he was in Paris for the moment.

The rain had stopped. I climbed a path back of the town, and reaching a rock face I tied my shoes together and slung them round my neck, then crept to an eyrie. From my ease there beneath a pollen-dropping pine I looked down on the pastel stuccos, the post-card-blue bay, and the gray warship flying the Stars and Stripes. I meditated on my return to France, and on the peoples who had come before me, come and gone again—Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Goths, wave upon wave of the voracious generations; and I, hungry as any other, and as fugitive.

# THE HUK REVOLT

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## IN THE PHILIPPINES

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*by Alvin H. Scaff*

**A**N ARMED, Communist-led guerrilla force is fighting a civil war against the Philippine government on Luzon. Until a few weeks ago the fighting had been contained for the most part in the provinces to the east and north of Manila. Current news is that Hukbalahap raiders have killed twenty-one soldiers and civilians in Manila, wounded eleven others, and kidnaped seven civilians within a forty-eight-hour period. The American Embassy has warned all United States citizens to seek a place of safety. Thus, the civil strife on Luzon, begun during the mopping-up operations in 1945, increases in intensity, destroys the peace of the Philippines, and embarrasses the one effort of the United States to establish a democracy in the Orient.

America is rightly concerned about the Philippines. Whatever one's opinion concerning the priority of Europe or Asia as a strategic diplomatic front, no one can deny that the precipitating incident that drew us into World War II occurred in the Far East and that the present struggle in Korea may bring on World War III. What happens in the Philippines cannot be dismissed lightly. Is our forty-five-year effort to establish a democracy in the islands come to naught? Is the Philippine Republic to fail in this first test? Why has the Hukbalahap revolt not long since been quelled? Who are the Huks, and why do they persist? The answers to these questions cover many facets of Philippine experience, some current and elusive, some old and long evident.

The Hukbalahap, meaning literally the People's Anti-Japanese Army, was organized during the chaos of the Japanese invasion in the early days of World War II. Its founders, Pedro Abad Santos, the socialist, Juan Feleo, peasant leader, Louis Taruc and Mariano

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Balgos, labor leaders, organized bands of guerrilla fighters and fought the Japanese in central Luzon. Probably the most successful of the guerrilla forces in opposing the Japanese, the Huks gave the land of the owners who had fled to Manila to the peasants and made it possible for them to harvest crops and survive relatively unmolested. But the Huk guerrilla force under the leadership of Louis Taruc, who either was a Communist before the war or was converted during the struggle, never established friendly relations with official guerrilla forces in the islands. When the Americans invaded Luzon in 1945, Taruc was arrested and jailed as an outlaw. He had committed the crime of being the wrong kind of guerrilla.

During three years of war the Huks had killed 25,000 Japanese, spies, and collaborators. For this they expected some commendation. Instead, Taruc and his companions were rewarded with seven months in jail. This may have been a grave mistake. Until this time the Huk movement had been anti-Japanese (they had offered one complete division for the invasion of Japan, but were turned down); henceforth, it became a civil revolution, anti-American and anti-Philippine government. Taruc complained, "We did not expect this treatment from Americans who are pledged to fight fascism and who have assured us Filipinos that they are our allies. They certainly did not treat us as allies."

Some of the root causes of the Hukbalahap are therefore to be traced to war—to the need of organized opposition to the Japanese, to the availability of arms and ammunition gleaned from the USAFFE surrender, and to the absence of the landlord group which had moved into the sanctuary of Manila. Other reasons for the Huks' persistence stem from the days of American reoccupation, when the old landlord group in spite of its collaborationist record was brought back to power with the aid of MacArthur's pardon of Roxas and his election to the presidency. But basically the Huks are sustained by the agrarian unrest in central Luzon and the failures of the Philippine Republic to deal adequately with this problem.

No revolution comes into being and continues solely as a result of agitation. Though the Communist leadership of the Hukbalahap be ever so canny, it could never produce a movement of sufficient



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strength to threaten the constituted government unless conditions actually exist which incline large numbers of Filipinos toward revolution. These conditions do exist and are manifest in two forms: first, in the extensive corruption in the Philippine government recently much publicized, and second, in the long-standing oppression of the Filipino farmers, who constitute about 80 percent of the working force. This second source of unrest is by far the oldest, the most deep-seated, and the most serious problem in the Philippines today. To face this problem, to understand it, and to deal with it fearlessly and intelligently would be to create a positive program for meeting the challenge of communism not only on Luzon but in all Asia; for the agrarian problem, though it may have unique features in every country, is common throughout the Orient.

Agrarian unrest in the Philippines grows out of a problem of land tenure and of the suppression of the peasants who till the soil. The 1939 census indicated that 49 percent of the farms were operated by owners, but it must be remembered that most of these farms were only small plots of ground. One-fourth of all the farms in the Philippines contain less than one hectare of land (about two and one-half acres). On the basis of 1938 prices such an area could be expected to yield an income of only \$60 a year. There is no magic about ownership itself that eliminates poverty, though ownership seems to be a step in the right direction. The "large" farms, twenty hectares (fifty acres) or over, were owned by only one and three-tenths of the population.

The percent of owner-operated farms varies widely from province to province in the Philippines. Over 95 percent of the farms in 1939 were owner-operated in peaceful Palawan; 12 percent were owner-operated in turbulent Pampanga. The Hukbalahap revolt is centered in the rice-growing provinces of central Luzon. This is not accidental. A survey of farm tenancy shows that Pampanga (with over 70 percent of her farms tenant-operated), Nueva Ecija (over 66 percent tenant-operated), Bulacan (over 64 percent tenant-operated), and Tarlac (53 percent tenant-operated) head the list of all provinces in the Philippines. These are the very provinces where the Huks are strongest. They are also the same provinces where the

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Sakdalistas, a revolutionary group during the early 1930's, were active. They are the same provinces where the Filipino socialists under the leadership of Pedro Abad Santos massed political strength in prewar elections. Pedro Abad Santos was the teacher and mentor of Louis Taruc, son of a peasant and the present admitted Communist leader of the Huks.

Revolution in central Luzon is not new; the only new ingredient is that this time the unrest is Communist directed. The conditions under which rural people have long subsisted in these provinces are a periodic generator of protest movements. When the Americans first came to the Philippines in 1898, the peasants were in revolt against the Spanish rulers and the Church, which owned and operated large estates. After the American victors supported the Church's claim to ownership of the large estates, the Filipino rebellion was directed against our regime. In later years the Sakdals staged a revolution; now, the Hukbalahap. In every case, heretofore, the resort to repressive measures has stamped out symptoms without dealing with root causes. Would it not be foolish to hope that repression will be sufficient this time?

What is the nature of the difficulty in the tenant system in the Philippines? Why is the unrest so persistent? The feudal economy of sixteenth-century Spain was imported to the Philippines three hundred years before the American Navy added these islands to our expanding empire. Under Spanish rule the land was divided among *grandees* whose duty was to govern, to protect, and to provide opportunity for the spread of the Catholic religion. The proper place of the Filipino was one of obedience, loyalty, and hard work. He found himself tied to an estate system from which he has yet to free himself completely.

Early in the American period administrators trying to improve the lot of the common people ran afoul of the *caciques*, who were rich and powerful landowners. They encouraged peasants to borrow on terms so onerous as to make repayment of the debt virtually impossible. At that time a debt ordinarily drew 10 percent interest a month. A peasant, for example, who had borrowed thirty pesos might mortgage his child's services to the *cacique* as security for the

debt. After the child was given room and board in the household of the cacique the actual cash monthly wage was hardly sufficient to meet the three-peso interest charge. The thirty-peso loan thus became an effective means of enslaving a human being permanently. In similar fashion the peasant's entire family could be bound to the estate of the cacique and required to perform laborious tasks year after year with no possibility of paying more than the interest on the loan. This system was supported by laws favoring the lender and by strong customs opposing any interference in the private arrangements between cacique and peasant. Sooner or later the peasant was certain to have to borrow money. Since he never made enough to save for emergencies, the expenses of a fiesta, a wedding celebration, a funeral, or a gambling debt would force him to the mercies of the moneylender. Robert W. Hart in 1928 estimated that 20 percent of the total laboring force was held in practical slavery. American Governor J. C. Early, commenting on this situation in 1931, said, "The whole of central Luzon is ready for an uprising. It needs leadership only."

Though the peasants have made some gains in recent years the problem at present is far from solved. An Osmeña cabinet committee negotiating in 1945 secured approval of a sixty-forty division of the crop between the peasants and the landlords. However, Hernando Abaya, writing in 1946, reported that a fifty-fifty division of the rice harvest was common practice. Ordinarily this arrangement left the tenant with about sixty *cavans* of unmilled rice. (One *cavan* weighs about 120 pounds.) Half of this must be kept for food; from the other half must come the tenant's share of the cost of seedlings, harvesting, and threshing. Whatever is left—perhaps as much as \$25 to \$35 in cash value—must cover the family's living expenses for the year. Here again the problem of loans to tenants by their landlords and heavy interest rates is involved. Although legally at the present time the moneylender is limited to 12 percent interest a year, actually this amount is increased through the practice of a tenant's signing a note for more grain than he actually receives. Thus today as in the past the monotonous cycle of poverty, debt, and oppression is repeated again and again. Here lie the seeds of



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agrarian discontent that have sprouted and grown into the Huk-balahap revolt.

To suggest that this problem has been ignored would be to misrepresent the facts of recent Philippine history and to underestimate the acuity of Filipino statesmen. In 1938 Quezon said of the Filipino agricultural worker, "As he works from sunrise to sundown, his employer gets richer while he remains poor. He has to drink the same polluted water his ancestors drank for ages. Malaria, dysentery, and tuberculosis still threaten him and his family at every turn. His children cannot all go to school, or if they do, they cannot finish the whole primary instruction."

Quezon's administration tried buying large estates and selling the land to tenants on the installment plan. Several thousand families were resettled in the frontier land of Koronadal on Mindanao during the late 1930's. In 1945, Osmeña, mindful of the explosive nature of agrarian unrest in Luzon, demonstrated a willingness to negotiate compromise settlements between tenants and landlords. The government during Roxas' administration passed legislation providing a larger share of the harvest for the tenants, a program of resettlement, purchase by the government and resale of estates, and other agrarian reforms. But the short-lived agreement with the Huks broke down over the issues of turning in arms and the seating of the elected assemblymen from the Huk-controlled provinces. The record of recent Filipino governments is not all bad; but for the most part the story is one of well-directed legislation scuttled by poor administration or ignored by those in power who wish to see no basic reform carried out.

What can be done? In China, American policy makers were confronted with a stubborn dilemma. To do nothing in effect lent a helping hand to the Communists; to fight the Communists meant alliance with a corrupt and discredited political regime. We were condemned if we did and lost if we didn't. Now we face a similar problem in the Philippines. There is no question of coddling the Communists. American representatives and Filipino officials alike are convinced that the Communist leadership in the Huk movement is not primarily interested in agrarian reform but in political power.



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Taruc and his associates walked out on the lenient and promising agreement with the Quirino administration. No amount of well-devised and skillfully executed agrarian reform could bring peace with the Huk leaders now. Ramon Magsaysay, defense secretary of the Philippines, has recently reactivated a large resettlement program for Huk families in Mindanao, where they can be provided with land. Yet the relocation of large numbers of Huks, who have surrendered and co-operated with this program, has not immediately lessened the Huk resistance. It is now too late for agrarian reform alone to end the Communist revolt in the Philippines; however, no long-run solution to the rural unrest can be expected apart from a thorough change in agricultural organization.

What position can America take regarding this problem in the Philippines? American policy should be based on three propositions: first, the problems of tenancy, poverty, and usury must be solved, and the stranglehold of landlord interests over the economic and political affairs of the country must be broken. This principle is clear: to combat communism effectively requires the removal of the causes of unrest that gave it birth. When these causes are wiped out, communism in the Philippines will die for want of lifeblood. Second, the Communist-led Huk revolt must be put down. This involves a vigorous use of force to meet force. Admittedly a negative action, this course is necessary to establish the possibility of carrying out needed reforms. Third, the initiative and execution of plans must remain in Filipino hands. Quezon is reported to have said on one occasion, "I would rather see the Philippines run like hell by Filipinos than like heaven by the Americans." Whether accurately reported or not, the statement suggests an important insight into American-Filipino relations. America should be friendly and helpful in the struggle against the Huks, but the design of a program and its administration must remain in Filipino hands. There is no other road to responsibility and to wholesome relations.

While there is yet time, let America demonstrate to all Asia that in the Philippines she encourages a democracy to deal fearlessly not only with the Communists but also with the conditions that nurture their existence.

# THE NATURE OF

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*by Walter Buchanan*

**I**S RHYTHMIC "talent" native, or is it acquired? Are you born with a sense of rhythm or do you develop it? Prepare for a surprise. The answer to this question has been dawning on the writer for some time, and has been as much of a shock to him as it is to the average layman. Because all the evidence, statistical and otherwise, indicates that rhythm is acquired.

The author's interest in rhythmic talent was a by-product of efforts to validate the Seashore Measures of Musical Talent. His discovery, which amazed him, was that not only is the Seashore measure for rhythmic talent relatively unreliable, but also that it is practically valueless as a predictor of rhythmic performance. In fact, the Seashore measure of tonal memory is a better predictor of rhythmic performance than is the Seashore rhythm test. Now the test that Carl Seashore devised, which has been given to hundreds of thousands, proposes to test native talent, regardless of training. Perhaps one reason the Seashore test of tonal memory is both reliable and valid is that tonal memory is a truly native talent. And perhaps the difficulty with the Seashore rhythm test is simply that it attempts to measure something that does not exist.

Before getting down to statistical brass tacks, the writer must confess that there have been many signs pointing to the probably correct conclusion. His difficulty in reading the signs was undoubtedly occasioned by the ingrained notion of the native "sense of rhythm"—that some have it and some do not.

Many of us have repeated an anecdote concerning Frederick Stock, late conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. We have told the story as a joke, without realizing its significance or interpretation. It is said that Stock was playing golf one day and was decidedly off form. After several unsuccessful swings at the ball he turned to his caddy in exasperation: "Caddy, what's the matter with me?" The caddy, who knew Stock only as a golfer and not as a musician, said, "Well, frankly, Mister, you ain't got rhythm." The

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story strikes most listeners as being funny, because of its incongruity. Everyone knows that a musician must have rhythm. What we have missed is the meaning of the story. We may have rhythm in one situation because we have learned it, but not have rhythm in another situation because we have not learned it. In neither case is native talent involved.

A similar illustration of the nature of rhythmic talent is the plight of a certain dance-band musician, full of rhythm in his trade, but unable to dance rhythmically. Many people have been amused at some such instance, but how many have thought through to the conclusion that rhythm is not the result of talent, but of training, practice, and know-how.

The writer remembers vividly a certain student who struggled manfully in an attempt to master the fundamentals of musicianship. Not only the melodic but also the rhythmic sense seemed to be deficient. His ability to take rhythmic dictation, as well as his skill in reading rhythms, was decidedly below the average in a class of students who were not music majors. Imagine the amazement of the writer when he chanced to attend a student-body variety performance in which this young man was featured on a number of percussion instruments as part of a melody-percussion team. In this situation he seemed to be Rhythm personified. What is the explanation? In this latter case it was not necessary for the young man to read or analyze rhythms in the conventional way. He was master of this type of rhythm because he had spent so much time at it. In the classroom situation described above, the beat was slower and an analysis of note values was required. Consequently the young demon percussionist seemed to lack "rhythm."

So far as we know, Dr. Gallup has not polled public opinion as to the relative rhythm talent of white and Negro people. Nor would such a poll seem to be necessary, since opinion is virtually unanimous that Negroes have more rhythmic talent than whites. Again we have been jumping to the wrong conclusion in ascribing superiority in cer-



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tain types of rhythmic performance to a difference in native talent rather than to a difference in training. Negroes tend to be better in rhythm, not because they are just naturally better, but because practice in it has been for a long time more a part of their culture.

Our opinions in regard to the comparative capacities of Negroes and whites are so firmly fixed that the foregoing may be taken by many with more than a grain of salt. So let us compare two groups toward which the lay public has no strongly fixed prejudices, namely, singers and instrumentalists. When an instrumentalist quips, "Are you a singer or are you a musician?" he is usually referring to the fact that singers are notoriously unable to read rhythms accurately. Now before the race of singers descends in wrath upon the writer, he hastens to confess that he, too, is of their breed, a singer himself. Nevertheless, this illustration is too pertinent to be passed by. In the reading of vocal music—that is, in sight singing—instrumentalists are usually about as helpless as singers. However, rhythm reading is an exception. As a rule, singers make inexcusable errors in rhythm and seem to have little talent for it as compared with instrumentalists. Is anyone naïve enough to suppose that chance has universally blessed those deficient in native rhythmic talent with beautiful voices, perhaps as a sort of compensation? Or that people of high rhythmic talent have with one accord eschewed vocal expression, and taken to instruments? A much more plausible hypothesis is that training in rhythm and not talent is what makes the difference.

Many singers, especially soloists, learn their music more or less by rote. If rhythms are altered or tempos changed, the subservient accompanist is expected to "follow"—that is, to patch up the mess as well as possible. Singers, in their preoccupation with tone quality, simply lack discipline as regards rhythm. But the orchestral musician, on the other hand, has been required traditionally to count time and count measures of rest. An error in rhythm on his part hurts the perfection of the ensemble, and so he has been required to be exact in his reading of rhythms. Beat and tempo have become ingrained—so ingrained that they appear to be native.

All of the above points are cited to illustrate the fact that rhythm is a matter of background rather than talent, of environment and



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training rather than heredity. Rhythm is learned, and learned for a specific situation.

Perhaps such evidence, however, would not stand in a court of law or in a company of statisticians. And so, at the risk of dryness, the general nature of the statistical evidence ought to be presented. After all, statistics were the initial eye opener. Tables of the exact figures are, nonetheless, inappropriate here, as correlations that would set a statistician's spine tingling might lack luster to the uninitiated.

To review for a moment: Not just the writer, but countless researchers have indicated that whereas the Seashore test of tonal memory is reliable, as shown by test and retest, and valid, as shown by relationship to success in musical performance, the Seashore measure for rhythm is neither reliable nor valid. More than that, this researcher and several others have developed additional successful tests of melodic talent, similar to the Seashore tonal memory measure. On the other hand, so far as is known, no one has been successful in developing a really acceptable test of native rhythmic talent.

Such a test ought to be one which could be successfully administered to those untrained in rhythm and should also be a valid prediction of success in rhythmic performance. To judge this latter factor, the most objective measure available is rhythmic dictation. Suppose further that we correlate several other measures with rhythmic dictation, to see whether the relationship is high, and if so, whether the predictive measure may be used with the untrained as well as with the trained.

Here are the results of a recent study made by the writer, confirming previous studies. There were seventy-three subjects in the experiment. The best predictor of success in rhythmic dictation proved to be rhythmic dictation itself—but not until after a certain amount of training. The next best predictor was the Kwalwasser-Ruch test, a measure not so much of talent as of background. A sight singing test, and the Seashore test of melodic talent (tonal memory) showed the next highest correlations. All researchers in this field keep wistfully trying to prove that intelligence is a factor

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worth considering in relationship to musical performance. In the present study, the writer went so far as to correlate not only the total scores on the A.C.E. psychological test with rhythmic dictation, but also, separately, the scores on the quantitative and linguistic portions. Fifth- and sixth-ranking predictors of success in rhythmic dictation were quantitative intelligence and the total intelligence score. Almost exactly tied for last place as measures of success in rhythm were the linguistic portion of the A.C.E. test and the Seashore measure for rhythmic talent!

May the writer hasten to caution against discrediting music talent tests in general and the trail-blazing Seashore talent tests in particular on the basis of this disappointing showing of the Seashore rhythm test. Of Seashore's six measures, his tests for tonal memory and pitch have achieved an increasing reputation for reliability and validity in the light of every investigation. These two measures, and others similar to them, are worthy of the greatest respect.

The noteworthy point in regard to the above "talent" tests for predicting success in rhythmic performance is that the two most successful were not talent tests at all, but tests of background. The next two best dealt with melodic talent, which most researchers have generally thought of as being completely different from rhythmic talent. At the end of the list comes the only test that purports to be a test of rhythmic talent, and the only test appropriate to a group of people untrained in rhythm. Again, may it be suggested that rhythmic talent tests have failed, not because of inexpert test construction, but because they are unable to measure that which does not exist.

All this is bad news to some and good news to others. It is bad news to that great group of people who would like to get by on their assumed rhythmic "talent," rather than learn to count time in a tedious fashion apparently more appropriate to the untalented. It is disturbing news also to those who complacently attribute their errors in rhythm to lack of talent. On the other hand, it is very good news to those aspiring musicians who are sincerely concerned over their deficiencies in rhythm. Whereas a deficiency of melodic talent or tonal memory may well be fatal to higher musical aspirations,

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what appears to be a lack of rhythmic talent is no more than a lack of rhythmic background and a sufficient amount of the right kind of practice.

May it be suggested, then, that if this is the situation as regards rhythmic "talent" in music, it may also be the case in other fields of rhythmic performance? Don't blame nature or your heredity if you don't have rhythm, whether as a golfer, a dancer, or a singer. Just keep trying, under the proper guidance. Rhythm is something you can get.

*Lines for a Civilization  
in Search of a Scapegoat*

LOVERNE BROWN

In these bleak days  
when men have died  
in uglier ways  
than crucified

in each of us  
the urge is loud  
like Pontius  
to blame the crowd

for courting doom,  
yet wash of guilt  
the hands by which  
this cross was built!



# THE DAY OF THE CHILD

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*by Grant H. Redford*

IT WAS all mixed up. He tugged at the web of sheets in which he had enmeshed himself. Everywhere was restraint. Across his throat the twisted fibers lay like rope. In the foggy semiwakefulness he was sure that the turmoil of his mind was only a dream; he kept saying so. It's all a dream, he said to himself.

He raised himself on an elbow: there was the desk, a concentration of dark in the obscure room, an arm's distance in the corner; there along it the stack of books; the chair against it. He rubbed his forehead, then lifted the Venetian blind to breathe of the spring night air. A car went by, whining around the corner, plunging to far parts of the sleeping city. Two street lights held up the cottony darkness. He rubbed his hand across his eyes.

For two nights the dream had claimed him, and he had got up and come into the study so that his wife would not be disturbed. But he was grateful not to have dreamed of the boy. But wait—perhaps it *was* about the boy.

Dry-mouthed and distorted with shame, he lay back trying to blot out Sunday: the look in his son's eyes; his wife's scorn; the sudden stillness in the neighborhood. It was too recent to be faced. Forcing his eyes shut, he induced darkness like a ball of yarn impaled on the spindle of sound from the blind stilling itself against the window frame. The sensation was the last he had before sliding into sleep.

But there it was again, waiting for him: his father was beating the horse! His horse, the roan mare, the second horse he'd ever broken to work. For him she would do anything, with grace and style; but for few others. His father vowed that either she'd work for him, too, or for anyone, or he'd break her damned head.

They were working on a fill up by the main canal headgate and eight horses had been hooked on to a partially dug-out stump. He cried out against their hitching the young roan to a dead weight.

## THE DAY OF THE CHILD

But the father picked up a club and ordered the team forward. When they tightened against the stump she began to dance. His father swung the club against her head back of an ear. She fell to her knees. She trembled there; then tried to rise. He hit her in the ribs and she got up. "Get back!" he commanded the boy. He tightened the reins and ordered them forward again. This time she lunged ahead before the others could get set. When they went forward she plunged back, snarling the reins and tugs. He hit her again and she fell to her knees, then keeled on her side as another blow crashed on her skull.

When he woke again in his study he was twisted in the sheets. He rubbed his aching head. His hand came away wet. He turned on his light and reached for a cigarette. Then he lay back in the ropy sheets trying to quiet his trembling. "Ah, God," he whispered, trying to shake the dream from his eyes.

Cars were busy on the street now, heading for 6:00 A.M. appointments. Soon the boy would be up—his four-year-old son. Would he come in? He hadn't yesterday morning.

He turned the light off and lay in the murky light, taking the smoke in deep, letting it out slowly. As his eyes became accustomed to the light, and the morning increased, he watched the smoke filter up between the slats of the blind.

He had never been able to forgive his father for the roan. Over almost everything after that they had had trouble which often ended in violence. When he became sixteen he'd run off and joined the Navy. When he got out four years later, his father had met him in San Francisco and they'd had a beer together in a little tavern on Grant Avenue not far from Chinatown. They'd walked through the streets of the town, his father trying to talk of all the places the boy had been, showing that he had read up on each place the family had received a post card from. But nothing came of it. He had refused his father's hope that he return to the ranch. "Things will be different now. We've both learned a few things these last few years," his father had said, trying to make a joke of it.

But he had stayed and got a job with a hardware firm. He hadn't even seen his father since the child was christened four years ago.

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It was lighter now. And still the house was quiet. After snubbing his cigarette against the cool damp of the apple-tree limb which came almost into the room, he closed the window carefully. Then listened. No one else was awake.

Relaxed now and covered with the smoothed blankets, he began to drowse, then slipped off into the first gentle sleep of two nights.

When he awakened, his four-year-old son was standing in the doorway, quietly, like a ghost, watching. The sound of him leaning against the door frame and shifting on his blue house-shoe-clad feet had awakened him. He sat up slowly and smiled. "Hello, son." He held out his hand. The boy hesitated, twitching his elbows against himself as if he were cold, running his hand around the band of his pink pajamas.

"I watched you sleeping," the boy said as if it were something to say, something to remove the hesitancy between them. On other mornings he had come bouncing in.

The man still held out his arms and the boy came slowly into them, close, allowing himself to be hugged, saying again, "I watched you sleeping."

"I'm glad you did," the man said, vowing again and again that he would never treat the child as he had done Sunday. "If you hadn't come in I'd have overslept, and I've got to get to work, haven't I?"

The boy pulled away, eagerly lifting the covers. "You'd better hurry. Here. Here are your house shoes."

Thank God, the man thought, breathing deep to relax a tightness in his chest. It was all passed now. His son had forgotten it already. Being young, he had forgotten. And that was that. "Thanks, sonny boy," he said as he put his feet into the held shoes.

"When can I get some like yours, Daddy? I don't like blue ones any more."

The man laughed and said he could have some like Dad's just any day he wanted. Just any day they could get down and let him pick out the ones he wanted.

At breakfast his wife said he looked pretty seedy and what was the matter, hadn't he been able to sleep again? And he said that the



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strange bed or something had given him a bad time. But that at least he hadn't disturbed her, which she denied, saying that she guessed she'd become used to having him in her bed.

The boy had been leaning against the table watching his father. He spooned at his oatmeal only when urged. Now he said, "I'm going to get some house shoes just like Dad's."

The mother and father exchanged quick glances and then matter-of-factly announced that that was fine and that maybe they could Saturday afternoon when the father was home from work. "Oh, goody," the boy said and began overfilling his mouth.

The father ruffled the boy's short blond curls and kissed him, away from the cereal smears, then hurried to go. The wife walked with him to the door. "He's forgotten it already," she whispered encouragingly. He gripped her hand a moment, then kissed her, calling good-bye to his son as he hurried out. At the corner, he looked back. The boy was staring from the window in the same concentrated manner of the morning. He didn't wave in answer to his father, as if he were looking but not seeing, the same as he had done yesterday. The man waved again. This time the boy answered, and as if he meant it.

"Ah," the man sighed, "he may not have quite forgotten, but he will."

The morning was sharp and refreshing. He almost forgot the weariness which his long bones retained from his dream-broken sleep. Thinking of his lack of sleep returned him to his dream. Whatever had become of the roan? Try as he might, he could recall nothing beyond unsnarling her from the harness, and the small trickle of blood from her left nostril.

He sighed and welcomed the intrusion of a newspaper being shaken in his face by his seat companion, who was folding the sheet for more convenient reading. The smell of wool and shaving lotion mingled with the damp newsprint—a little like the excavation around the old stump, a little like his father those long-ago Sundays riding through the fields to church.

He squirmed, almost angrily, as his father intruded. But he found himself discovering that the father of then was not the father



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who had wandered with him through San Francisco, nor the one who had come to the child's christening and who sent little gifts for them at Christmas along with a short note hoping that they "might get together at least once before another Christmas." Last Christmas he had added, "You know, none of us are getting any younger." And then in the joking tone he tried to use in the recent years, "You can't tell, maybe my grandson would like me if we could get acquainted."

He'd like the boy all right: that lively, bright face and gray eyes. What his father might think should he see the bruise on the boy's face he would not contemplate.

He arrived at work full of tension. The demands of the office didn't give him a chance to relax, though he tried to ease his mind by calling home at noon. The boy was fascinated by the telephone and usually was eager to talk on and on about nothing. But today he'd gone shy and would only grunt a "yes" or "no" to questions. Then he talked with his wife, who was sure that everything was all right—"just one of his spells."

But the tension remained. And not until evening and his return on the crowded bus did he relax from the office pressure. On the front page of the paper, once again being shaken in his face, he read the headlines of stress and strain. But soon he lay back in the jouncing seat. Boy, oh boy, he hoped he could sleep tonight. One more night like the last two and his work would be such as to make the boss cry his eyes out. Then, to his surprise, he dozed off and awakened over halfway home when the newspaper reader shoved by him, begging his pardon and stepping on his foot. Someone else slumped down beside him.

Thoroughly awake now, he wondered about the boy. Would he be at the window? Maybe at the gate? Waiting, or just watching as he had been that morning? Would he refuse to talk as he had at noon? Oh, the boy would get over it. Surely he would. After all, it had been only two days, three now. The first morning he hadn't come in at all. And this morning he'd come and waited for an invitation. And maybe tomorrow . . .

If it had been trouble between himself and his wife, they could

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have talked it out. But what do you do or say to your four-year-old? Can you clear it all up with an, "I'm sorry, son," and an explanation of how it seemed from your view? What could he do? What could he say?

The enormity of his failure engulfed him and he was thankful for the privacy of the congested bus. By turning his head to the window as if interested in the lighted interiors and people taking a last look out before pulling the blinds for the night, he could escape into his remorse: he had *mauled* his child. And for what? He covered his eyes against the breath-dampening glass. He didn't dare turn for fear his shame would be a poster for indifferent eyes. Yet, had he been able to uncover his back for them to beat upon, he might have felt he could endure himself.

That Sunday evening he had justified it: "The child must learn that he shouldn't go around oppressing others." His wife had been horrified. "You're crazy, man. What does the child know of 'oppression'? It is you who's committed the crime! *You.*" But he had known before she spoke. He had known like one awakening from a dream of violence that isn't a dream.

He hadn't stopped to think; he had been unable to think. Seeing his son rush into the little girl's yard and knock her down, he had streaked out like one recoiling from electric shock and grabbed the child, seeing as from a great height the amazement, then the convulsive fear on the child's face. He had shouted so that all the neighbors had come to their doors. He had dragged the child across the street from the neighbor's yard, thrusting it violently into his own house. Too frightened to cry, the child had lain on the carpet shaking and making noises in its throat. Not for several minutes had he begun to cry. Except for a moan of anguish from his wife and her thrusting him away and taking the child to its room, the house had been stunned and still.

Then the child's sobbing had taken over, while he sat and cursed himself. Some time following the child's sobbing, he had gone to the boy's room where he lay tear-stained and exhausted in sleep. His mother had looked up from the bedside where she was kneeling and in quiet anger and compassion charged the man, "If this ever hap-

pens again, I'll leave you." He had sat on the bed and laid a trembling hand on the child's knee. And the child, almost as if he could see, had tensed his leg and whimpered. Covering his face with his hands, he, too, had wept.

"When I saw him hit the little girl and knock her down, something exploded in me," he tried to explain.

"But it was the bigger boys who put him up to it," she said. "They do it all the time."

"But he shouldn't have. Can't you see? He shouldn't have."

Then she had scorned him. "And do you think you have made matters better?"

It all poured through him in the lurching bus, burning his eyes with unshed tears. But reliving his guilt and grief had a little cleansed him.

The boy was in the window, grave and hesitant, but he waved as the father came around the corner. He'd been waiting all right; but he didn't meet him at the door. He remained at the window where the man went and kissed him. "How's my boy?" he said. And the boy said, "Just fine," though he didn't follow in to wash. And when the man returned to the kitchen and the smell which recalled happy moments out of his youth—frying trout given them by a neighbor—the boy was outside sitting under a tree looking across to the neighbor's yard where the little girl was playing with some other children from the street.

"He hasn't left the yard all day," his wife said. "I couldn't get him to."

"Oh no!" he said, and started walking around the kitchen. He stopped and turned the cold-water tap, testing the water with his finger as if he'd forgotten he wanted a drink. "What would you say to spending our vacation at the ranch?" he asked without looking at her, knowing she'd be surprised. She turned to him. The splashing water and the sizzling fish made sound together.

"If you'd like to . . ." She hesitated and continued with dinner.

"Well, he keeps asking us, you know. And I was thinking the boy might like it. And . . ." There seemed nothing else to say so he went out and called his son.

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At dinner, almost as in the morning, the boy leaned against the table, barely dipping into his food. The parents talked, but did not intrude on the child except to urge him to try the "fine fish, just like Daddy used to catch up on Grandpa's ranch." After a while, the boy, who had been periodically brushing the back of his hand across his eyes as if something were hurting him, said, "Daddy . . ."

Eagerly the father turned. "Yes, son?"

They waited. Then the boy said, hesitating between the words, rubbing at his face, "Daddy . . ."

"Yes, son . . .?"

It came in a rush. "Today I didn't push Carol down."

The father gripped his napkin.

Seeing that the man could not speak, the mother answered, "You're a good boy."

But the boy waited, watching his father's flushed face. Then the man reached and covered his son's hand. After a moment, still holding the boy's hand, he began talking of a trip they'd been planning and asked if the boy would like to go.

And the boy said he would.



# MUSIC AND THE HUMAN NEED

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*by Ross Lee Finney*

A DISTINGUISHED American physicist, Merle A. Tuve, has said that what is needed in the world today is not more emphasis on science, but a renewed emphasis on the humanities. Our society is coming more and more to understand how pressing is our need for a broader cultural philosophy. Although our emphasis on material things has been perhaps an inevitable result of pioneer society, we can hardly continue to ignore, to the extent that we do, the spiritual qualities that can give to our culture greater substance and value. In this connection, I trust I will be forgiven if, as a composer, I dwell upon the relation of the composer to the humanities, a relationship which is sometimes forgotten and which seems to me very important indeed.

Let me start by mentioning two fallacies that injure the understanding of music in our society. The first I will call the fallacy of the audience, and the second the fallacy of musical verbalization. They are not the only factors that militate against a vital musical culture in America, but I think they are two of the most pernicious.

The past several decades have been dominated by the idea of social consciousness. Every phase of culture has been examined as a social phenomenon and no individual has escaped the demand that his activity be seen in the larger light of the group. When the physicist contributes to the making of a bomb that can wipe out civilization, it is obvious that science must accept social responsibilities. And so the concept of individuality gives way, quite rightly, to the concept of social responsibility. The artist is asked to filter his expression through this critical sieve of social consciousness. Critics arise who accept the social standard as the only standard of judgment. When E. M. Forster speaks out for "Art for Art's sake," it is considered more witty than valid.

That the composer is a part of society and that his work is contributive to social culture is so obvious that it needs no stress. But

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that the composer is writing for a mass audience, a social group, is a completely fallacious idea. It is harmful to the listener because it seems to excuse the individual from making an effort to understand the art of music and harmful to the composer since it builds up a basis of judgment which is not realistic from the standpoint of musical craft.

The art of music is a reality only in sound. It makes its effect through the human ear. All that the composer can do is to write music that will be heard by an individual. The audience is merely a collection of individuals, listening individually and hearing according to their individual abilities. An audience is just so many people with so many ears, each person experiencing in his own way the ideas of the composer. To understand the audience in these terms is not to deny spontaneous mass response or to deny the power of music to sway people to common action; but to exaggerate mass reaction to music and to fail to realize the individuality of hearing is to distort the values of music as a part of human experience. It is this individual relationship between artist and listener that the composer seeks, and when he is told to become socially conscious he is at a loss to find a valid technique for such a purpose. Naturally, he may write a simple work which more people can readily understand—but such a work is not particularly socially conscious, it is just uncomplicated. Whether what he writes is simple or complicated, he is in any case writing music for another single person to hear.

I dwell on this point because the basis for the composer's judgment will be his own ear, and the ear is something that he has in common with other men. There is no such thing as a mass ear: there are just many ears, and though they differ in their sensitivity, they do not differ basically in their physical construction. The composer knows perfectly well that sound impinging upon the consciousness of the listener will produce some sensations that all people of the same culture have in common and some sensations through association that they do not have in common and over which he cannot have the slightest control. He develops his music, therefore, giving as great an emphasis as he can to what is common in people's hearing.

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When he ventures, as he must, upon his own individual path as a composer, he knows that the only measurement that can exist between his own ideas and the hearing of the audience is the ear. This instrument he has in common with all men; this alone he can trust. As long as everything that he writes has been truly and honestly judged by his own ear, he knows that in time other ears can respond. The composer's ear is of course highly trained and highly sensitive and the music that he writes may at first sound strange to the untrained ear, but if it has been based on the judgment of the ear and not the judgment of the mind, alone, then in time other ears will hear the same beauty of sound that the composer has heard. In a word, the only basis of his judgment is the knowledge that what he hears he can make another person hear, and it does not matter whether that other person is alone listening to his music or one of a great audience.

In music, more perhaps than in any other art, the process is of one creative individual speaking directly to another individual. If the individual listener allows the mental process of association to impose personal memories and reactions upon the music, he may listen, but he will not hear—just as in painting one may look but not see. Stravinsky remarks that “people like music because it gives them certain emotions, such as joy, grief, sadness, an image of nature, a subject for day-dreams, or—still better—oblivion from everyday life. Music would not be worth much if reduced to such an end. When people have learned to love music for itself, when they listen with their ears, their enjoyment will be of a far higher and more potent order, and they will be able to judge it on a higher plane and realize its intrinsic value.”

What are the intrinsic values of music? What is this higher and more potent order that we may hear in music if we listen with our ears? It has to do with those patterns of sound that make listening to music memorable. I often think of the musical experience as being like a flight. After the gala preparations and the ticket buying, we find ourselves in a plane with the door closed and the engines tuned. With the first movement of the plane as it pulls away from the airport we become a part of an event which is measured by time but which is given meaning by the way in which other functions take



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place within time. With a slow introduction we pull out to the end of the air strip. Then with terrific force and with sudden change of tempo we rush along the ground on a static level but with great momentum. Suddenly we rise and we follow a projected arc which carries us to a point over another airfield. We do not dive headfirst into the ground. We achieve a position above the airport and we carry out a maneuver of landing, a circling, a change of tempo, and then suddenly we are once again on the ground, still moving but with the brakes gradually stopping our movement. We may talk about the sunset or the lovely cloud effects, but the basic experience of the flight has been the carrying out precisely of certain fundamental aeronautic functions in which we as passengers are actively involved though we may not be consciously aware of them.

The composer is the pilot of such a musical flight, and he too is concerned with certain functions in which you as a listener must actively participate until the music is

heard so deeply

That it is not heard at all, but you are the music

While the music lasts.

I like my analogy of the musical experience to air flight, for it emphasizes the degree to which that experience exists in the present. The experience of flight is neither in the past nor in the future; it is lived in the present alone and its meanings and values must be understood in terms of the immediacy of the experience. So, too, with music: it is the art, as Stravinsky says, "in which man realizes the present. By the imperfection of his nature, man is doomed to submit to the passage of time—to its categories of past and future—without ever being able to give substance, and therefore stability, to the category of the present." Music's sole purpose is to establish order in this realm—to bring about this unique co-ordination between man and time. The musical manuscript has no meaning until performance has once again given it existence in the present.

To talk about the extramusical associations that come to your mind when you listen to music—the sunsets and the cloud formations of our musical flight—is merely to escape actively par-



ticipating in the fundamental musical experience. Any factor of performance, prejudice, or thought that carries the mind of the listener, even momentarily, away from the thread of the sound will defeat the fullest participation in the music, for, unlike air flight, one's body is not moving along with the events, but only one's mind; and the composer cannot fully trap the mind of the listener as the pilot can trap the body of the passenger within the plane. The composer must depend upon the volition of the listener to concentrate his whole sensory being upon the musical statement. Only by such concentration does the listener participate in the music.

Musical form and pattern result from inner functions just exactly as the flight of the airplane results from the aeronautic functions that are carried out by the pilot. Very often people misunderstand these inner musical functions and seek meaning in music from factors that are apart from the music. Let us be concerned, then, for a moment, with the functions that bring about musical form.

The architect and the commercial designer are taught that form is the result of function plus means. This formula makes a good deal of sense. If you build a bridge and there is only rock and no wood in the area, you build a bridge that has the special form that rock gives, or if the river is particularly wide and the function demanded of the span beyond the strength of stone and wood, you may have to ship in steel, which will greatly alter the form of the bridge. To build a house that looks like a ship or a newspaper building that looks like a cathedral is to ignore the function of the architecture and therefore to distort the form. Good taste in design — good styling—cannot accept such distortion. In the long run the inappropriateness of the form will distress the owner and perhaps undermine the functional usefulness of the article. The risk is a dangerous one for a designer to take.

The principle of fashion, however, often works in opposition to the idea of functional form. Fashion often encourages the unfunctional, since it demands change of appearance even though the function does not and cannot alter. An excellent example is the latest models in automobiles. The function of the car hasn't altered one iota; the materials—the means—may have altered slightly

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because of shortages, but the changes in form that we see in new cars are mostly for the purpose of sales talk and consist largely in superficial changes of ornament. Fashion in cars is kept within reasonable limits. But fashion may lead to form that is unrelated to function, as in the modern toaster where the fad for streamlining makes of the toaster an excellent missile without any particular effect on its function, or the lady's hat where fad may be carried to such an extreme that the function of headcovering is forgotten.

The architect and the designer are fortunate because they are usually quite sure of the function of the article that they are designing. Nobody will debate the function of a house or of a toaster because it is perfectly obvious. The means, also, is obvious. You just don't build a toaster out of paper or a car out of rock. There is certainly a range of choice, and selection is important—particularly when it comes to dollars and cents—but there is no confusion as to what we mean by “means.” This formula of the architect is clear when applied to architecture, but when it is applied to the other arts we are not always sure just what we are talking about.

What is “function” in music? Do we mean music-that-is-written-to-be-played-at-the-football-game? This is certainly the “social function” of music, but is it what we mean when we speak of function in music? When we speak of “means” are we referring to the brass band that performs the music at the game, or are we referring to the language tradition of Western music that makes our band sound very different from a Chinese band? What are we talking about when we say the “means” of music?

When my colleagues try to make “social function” plus “performance means” equal form in music they come to silly conclusions. Consider the music of the “Star Spangled Banner.” The “social function”—a drinking song for the Anacreon Society of eighteenth-century London; the “performance means”—the slightly inebriated pre-barbershop singers of that club devoted to good eating. Now these two are supposed to add up to “form.” Well, what form are we talking about, the simple form of that drinking song as it was in the eighteenth century or the music as it stands now when performed by a great brass band? Or consider a work by

Bach written for the intimate court of some aristocrat to be performed on the tiny clavichord. Today it may be performed on a pianoforte for an audience of six thousand, or, indeed, for a much larger radio audience. Both social function and means of performance are totally different from those that Bach had in mind. But does this modern change alter the *form* of Bach's music? I think not, since the form has come from less obvious internal forces. In both cases function has been inner function, not social function, and means has had to do not so much with the performance medium as with the vocabulary of Western music as a language.

If the architect's formula is related to the inner stuff of music then it makes very good sense indeed and can help to clarify what is meant by actively participating in the musical experience. The inner functions of music plus the means of communication do add up to musical form, a musical form which is entirely internal. To be aware of these inner functions and at home with the language of musical communication and as a result to feel and to understand the pattern that makes music memorable—this demands careful listening and active hearing.

Our second fallacy is the fallacy of musical verbalization—words, talk, criticism. As Stravinsky says, "To talk music is risky, and entails responsibility." Therefore, some prefer to seize on side issues. It is easy, and enables you to pass as a deep thinker.

"What does it matter whether Beethoven's Third Symphony was inspired by the figure of Bonaparte the Republican or Napoleon the Emperor? It is only the music that matters." To talk music is often merely an escape from the experience of hearing and it reveals often the shallowness of the individual who refuses to be a part of a living humanism. Both of these two fallacies—the fallacy of the mass audience and the fallacy of musical verbalization—are used as escapes by the individual who cannot or will not be a functioning part of his own culture. Therefore, when you consider Mr. Tuve's statement that what the world needs is greater emphasis of the spiritual qualities of the humanities, remember that this demands in the field of music an active participation on your part as an individual. It will do little good to think about the mass audience,



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since the mass audience is simply a collection of individuals and you are one of those individuals. It will do harm to escape into talk about music unless you accept as an individual the responsibility of actively participating in the music.

What do I mean by active participation in music? I mean, of course, loving music for itself, listening to it with your ears, hearing in it those intrinsic values that belong to music and music alone as an art. There are only two ways in which an individual can actively participate in an art: he can either produce it or he can live it as the creative artist intended him to. It is not a simple matter to compose music and there can never be as large a group of "Sunday composers" as there are "Sunday painters." But active participation in music—active hearing—doesn't demand that a person create music. Music is written by the composer for that great group of individuals for whom the art has meaning. There is, however, a wonderful mid-ground in music—the area of performance, which is halfway between the creative process and the listening process. While to perform music doesn't insure active listening on the part of the performer, it nevertheless does more than anything else, perhaps, to make the individual one with the music. One cannot perform music as a part of a string quartet unless one listens as an individual to the music that is produced. The person who plays chamber music or sings with a choral group has little time to talk about music. The fallacies of mass audience and musical verbalization have little effect on the person who with devotion and pleasure is producing music.

Modern science has given the arts many inventions that seem, and truly are, very wonderful. We cannot exaggerate the contribution of the phonograph and the radio as mediums for bringing the art of music to people. But we must always realize that they do not insure, by any means, active participation in the art. Indeed, they insure almost the opposite unless great care is taken. It is pleasant to sit by the fire and turn on your favorite record, but by doing this you may only be indulging in animal comforts and not at all joining in one of the dreams that have made man human.

In music, man has evolved a substantial world of form in the



unsubstantial realm of sound. This dream of man to create a world of meanings and values from his sensuous reactions to sound is a typical attribute of humanism. "By his wilful departure from his animal destiny, by his effort to set himself up in rivalry with nature and to put forth an independent creation, more responsive to his nature and desire than the actual world" he becomes human.

It is important that we remember that music is one of the symbol-making activities of man and that these activities, as Lewis Mumford says, "have until now played a far larger part in human life than his technical mastery of the natural environment through weapons and tools. Dreaming is the dynamic, forward-striving, goal-seeking complement to remembering. . . . it is not an accident, but the very essence of human life, that some of its best and its worst moments are lived exclusively in the mind."

The arts, chief among the humanities, are concerned with the human need to dream beyond the material world and through symbols to create worlds in unreality. Without this fantasy of art—without this function of interpretation which comes from the capacity to use language—man's world would collapse. To quote Lewis Mumford further: "If all the mechanical inventions of the last five thousand years were suddenly wiped away, there would be a catastrophic loss of life; but man would still remain human. . . . Almost all meaning above the animal level of response comes through abstraction and symbolic reference: in fact, the symbolic medium is the very one in which man, as man, lives and moves and has his being. . . . Without constant reference to essences, as represented by symbols, existence would be empty, meaningless, and absurd—which is, precisely, what it seems to the mere existentialist. But what the existentialist . . . finds lacking in the world is merely what is lacking in his philosophy. . . . When one begins by defacing the word one ends by defaming life. That is part of the plight of modern man."

And so when Dr. Tuve says that the need of today lies in the humanities, he is not so much urging us, I feel sure, to reacquaint ourselves passively with the monuments of the past as actively to become a part of the human impulses for expression of the present.

# SKEPTICISM AND

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*by Robert E. Fitch*

MODERN man is a curious sort of spiritual amphibian. One half of him lives in a realm of the mind where caution, doubt, tentativeness, provisional truths, and relative values are the intellectually respectable virtues and attainments. The other half of him lives in a world of social and political action which is the scene of heroic or preposterous affirmations of faith, of brazen bids for power, and of desperate drives for the establishment of monopoly in dogma.

Is there any connection between these two worlds which appear to be so disparate and so disconnected? The historical record indicates that there is a relationship between skepticism and social action. But the relationship is a multifarious one, and its quality is not at all what popular judgment assigns to it. In any case, if this apparent schism between reason and action is a prominent feature of our society, it is worth investigating and understanding.

Unfortunately the inquiry to which we turn is complicated by certain ambiguities. An initial ambiguity lies in the denotations of skepticism. There are at least four varieties. There is the preliminary skepticism of a Descartes or of a Herbert Spencer, which simply clears the way for the construction of a philosophy which later thinkers will regard as dogmatic in character. And there is the simon-pure skepticism of the Hellenistic Skeptics, of a Pierre Bayle, of a David Hume—men who might be called careerists in skepticism, since they made a lifelong vocation of it. Again, there is the relative social skepticism of a Rousseau or of a Reinhold Niebuhr, which rests on a firm foundation of faith in other values than those which are in current acceptance. And finally there is the radical social skepticism of the Cynics and of the Epicureans, both of whom, in different ways, challenged the very bases of all social institutions.

The crucial ambiguity, however, derives from an inherent contradiction between skepticism and all social functions. For man as

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a social being has to take for granted certain minimal conventions of communication, and both first and last he is inescapably a creature of faith and of action. Voltaire illustrates this very well. He may be called one of the great social skeptics because of his brilliant and successful warfare against the clericalism and the feudalism of the *ancien régime*. Yet an analysis of his skepticism shows that it was a fusion, in almost equal parts, of the sensationalistic empiricism of Locke and of the dogmatic rationalism of the Enlightenment. In the final accounting Voltaire must be described as a man of faith, who fervently believed in Nature, Reason, Science, Humanity, and God, as he timidly trusted in Freedom and in Immortality. Moreover, on those occasions when he wrote of skepticism in its purest form, he loved to treat it with the ridicule of a Lucian or with the obvious jibes of an Epictetus.

Nevertheless, in spite of the ambiguities of the problem, an inquiry into the social functions of skepticism may prove rewarding. The conclusions offered can be no more than empirical generalizations from history, statistical in character, valid in some cases and not valid in others. But they may serve as significant pointers and as useful tools of analysis in understanding the modern dilemma. With these qualifications I venture to submit seven propositions.

## I

*Skepticism flourishes in times of social disintegration.*

Skepticism always exists, but it does not always flourish. Indeed, there is a kind of correlation between skepticism and spiritual despair. There seem to be five good instances of this in the West. The first is the period of the Greek Sophists, when *arete*, or virtue, had degenerated into mere worldly success; and when, as the dialogues of Plato abundantly testify, both the "wise guy" and the "tough guy" exploited the ethical relativism of the times. The second is the



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period of the Hellenistic Skeptics, where Pyrrho illustrated how skepticism might serve a kind of religious function, until with later thinkers it degenerated into sophisticated futility. The third instance is the rise of nominalism in the later Middle Ages, as it prepared the way intellectually for the pulverizing of the medieval synthesis into nationalism, capitalism, Protestantism, democracy, and the atomism of Newtonian mechanics. A fourth instance is the positivism of Auguste Comte, as it thrived on the spiritual despair of the Continent after the French Revolution and Napoleon; and a fifth instance is the current positivism that rose out of the frustrations of the first World War. Incidentally, the origin of Buddhism in India, with its radically sensationalistic psychology and metaphysics, and its acute sense of the instability and transitoriness of life, is an analogous case. For Gotama was no less skeptical and agnostic and no more humanist in his piety than Pyrrho.

In presenting these instances I do not mean to be guilty of the reductive fallacy. I am not saying that skepticism is "nothing but" the philosophy of a defeated human nature, and that therefore it is to be healed at once with the poultice of authority and of faith. Indeed, it is a universal insight of the great world religions that suffering and despair are the spiritual preconditions to the discovery of truth, and I see no reason why philosophers—in spite of an incorrigible Pelagianism—might not occasionally serve as instructive verifications of this insight.

## II

*In general, skepticism sanctions conservatism and the status quo.*

With regard to this assertion—so contrary to popular expectations—the proof is in the pudding. The facts are notorious. There is a long list of brilliant skeptics who find themselves quite at home within the fold of the One True Church—Charron, Descartes, Malebranche, Pascal, Newman, G. K. Chesterton. For them the dogma of the Church is the rock of security from which they can sally forth to assault all else, being confident that, though other faiths may fall,



their true foundation will not fail them. There is another list of brilliant skeptics—Pyrrho, Protagoras, Montaigne, Hume, Balfour—not so given to the religious kind of piety, who display a remarkable reverence for the established institutions of their time. As for the positivism of Auguste Comte, which set out so bravely to be a ferment for revolution, it soon evolved into the crassest kind of social authoritarianism, with a religion of humanity which duplicated in solemn but grotesque caricature all the paraphernalia of the Roman Catholic Church, and with a theory of social organization which today is easily recognizable as Fascism.

The logic of this position is made explicit in Pyrrho and in Hume. After all, if we are persuaded of the uncertainty of the dogmas of religion, of the pronouncements of science, and of the institutions of society, there is only one thing that we have left, and that is custom. We have to respect custom simply because it is here, and no amount of skeptical analysis can annihilate its compulsive reality. To the revolutionary who proposes a change for the better, the skeptic raises the mild query, "What evidence is there that anything can be for the better?" Custom, at any rate, is familiar. We know how to behave with it. And, even if custom doesn't make sense, it can scarcely be worth the effort of an intelligent man to abolish one custom simply to inaugurate another. The foundation of custom shifts from skepticism to dogma when a disgruntled Calvinist clergyman like William Graham Sumner invests the mores with all the omnipotent, irrational, predestinating authority that he had refused to ascribe to his God. The only question, then, is whether our skeptic follows a shortsighted policy of expediency, and so falls in with the fad or the fashion of the moment; or whether he favors the security of an ancient and well-established custom, and so falls into the arms of the Church.

David Hume illustrates this point in practice as well as in theory. His socially sensitive nature told him correctly that the one true church of his day was neither Catholic nor Protestant, but the great temple of the cult of the middle classes. Accordingly, when he approached its portals in his *Principles of Morals*, he ceased to be the grave mocker and proceeded to dogmatize complacently

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about the "disinterested regard for riches," which was, apparently, his substitute for Spinoza's "intellectual love of God." Nor are we surprised to find him extolling, uncritically, the economic virtues of "discretion, caution, enterprise, industry, assiduity, frugality, economy, good-sense, prudence," and the like, as the very key to the avoidance of "disagreeable images" and to the entertainment of "pleasing ideas." So Hume could doubt the identity of the self, the immortality of the soul, the truth of miracles, the scientific law of causality, and the existence of God, but not for one moment could he question the validity of the middle-class values enshrined in the custom of the day.

### III

*In any case, skepticism is never the creed of the revolutionary.*

The underlying reason for this is metaphysical. The world of the revolutionary is a world of dynamic tendencies, in which God, or Nature, or History exhibits a significant choice of alternatives, and in which old and corrupt values give place to new and meaningful ones. Skepticism, on the other hand, has an implicit metaphysics of utter equilibrium or of utter chaos, in which the worse reason and the better reason are finally one, and in which it is futile to try to discriminate between the true and the false, the right and the wrong. In the world of the skeptic, peace is to be attained by acceptance and by *laissez faire*. In the world of the revolutionary, the ideal is to be achieved by deliberate interference with the processes of nature and through creative action.

Moreover, history indicates that the displacement of old values does not come primarily through their skeptical dissolution. The truly revolutionary figures in the Age of Reason were not a Voltaire nor a Diderot nor a d'Alembert, but a John Wesley in England and a Jean Jacques Rousseau in France; and Wesley and Rousseau were men more strong in faith than skilled in skepticism. In effect, what happens much of the time is that a more robust and dynamic faith simply elbows the old one out of the way, perhaps retaining a few of the values in the older system that may be deemed still useful.

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Thus two of the greatest social revolutions in the Western world came by way of Christianity and of communism. While the value systems of the two are far from identical, one may remark in communism today the same vulgar vitality of belief that so scandalized Marcus Aurelius in the Christians of his time.

### IV

*Nevertheless, skepticism may serve an emasculative function.*

While it cannot provide the primary impetus to change and to revolt, it may help to break down the morale of the party in power. Thus it may play a role that is ancillary to revolution. It cannot destroy anything by itself, but it may soften up the victim for destruction. Here the intelligent conservative is correct in believing that he has more to fear from skepticism than does the revolutionary. For revolutionary action and skepticism are so radically incompatible that there is an instantaneous repulsion between them. But conservatism and skepticism are functionally compatible. When that point has been reached where conservatism has really lost faith in its own dogma and actually rests on no more than the skeptical acquiescence in custom, then the conservative party is ripe for annihilation by a more rabid faith. The skepticism of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists played just such an ancillary role in preparing the French aristocracy for the Revolution.

In our day we may be reminded that skepticism can emasculate the forces of liberalism. This is partly because liberalism now signifies the status quo rather than the current revolutionary force. In any case there is a tremendous difference between the fighting liberalism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the wearied and dissolute liberalism of today. The fighting liberal was a man of faith who understood the precise character of the liberties that he cherished, who knew their limits and functions, and understood when to compromise them for the moment and when to be intransigent in their defense. The full vigor of the movement appears in a Milton, a Roger Williams, and a John Locke. The decay begins to set in with John Stuart Mill. Liberalism gradually



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becomes infected with skepticism, relativism, and nihilism; so that the liberal, who still feels that he wants to be free, no longer has any profound convictions about why he ought to be free or about what price he ought to pay for his freedom. When he has been sufficiently ripened into rottenness by his own skepticism, it is easy for any predatory power to strike him down.

### V

*Yet skepticism leaves untouched the irrational alternatives to action.*

Since the irrational alternatives do not rest on reason, they are neither strengthened by the faith in it, nor weakened by the loss of faith in it. These alternatives are at least three:

There is the alternative of Authority. It is significant that Comte's positivism finally succumbed to this alternative. It is also significant that, even as Comte was proclaiming his positivism, traditionalists like Burke in England and De Maistre and De Bonald in France were calling men back to the historic political and religious faith. In the same way the rise of positivism in the twentieth century has been paralleled by the robust growth of neo-orthodox theology in the Protestant world, and by the recrudescence of Thomism in the Roman Catholic world.

There is the alternative of Pleasure. In social philosophy this means the world of Bentham with his "Greatest Happiness Principle," a world which finds expression now in the socialism of contemporary England and in the Fair Deal of the United States, and points to its ultimate fulfillment in something like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. It is strictly an accident of semantics that the shibboleth of this society at present should be, not pleasure, but security.

There is the alternative of Power. The totalitarian state, whether Fascist or Communist, rests on the formula, "Believe, Obey, Fight!" and is untroubled by skeptical considerations. Or else, as George Orwell suggests in *1984*, in his brilliantly developed theory of "collective solipsism," the totalitarian society can swallow up skepticism and make it just one more tool in the service of Power.



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### VI

*And it still allows for the instrumental use of reason.*

It is the grand irony of our culture that, while men cannot reason intelligently about what they want, they can still use reason efficiently to get what they want. I distinguish two sorts of instrumentalism:

There is a cynical instrumentalism. Here reason is the tool of propaganda. Thus Soviet Russia exploits Marxian ideology as a front for designs that are essentially Machiavellian. It is found still useful to prattle about dialectical materialism and class warfare and expropriating the expropriators and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to engage innocent liberals in earnest discussions about the meaning of Marx, although the specific policies of Soviet Russia no longer have anything more to do with Marx than they have to do with the Gospel of Matthew. In this situation the "reason" of Marx provides the respectable façade behind which the disciples of Machiavelli plot their purposes.

There is a utopian instrumentalism. Here reason is the tool of the planned society. There may be no noble vision of the ends of society, nor any reasoned conviction about the values it should enshrine, but the skepticism about worthy ends is more than atoned for by the fierce rationalism which is applied to the means. And behind the eager expectation of the ever normal economic order, without unemployment, without crisis or depression, with the rationally adjusted wage scale, without risk for the entrepreneur, without financial losses for the farmer, with a universally reasonable standard of living, and with social security for all from the cradle to the grave, one discerns the firm outlines of the old mechanistic faith in a *physique sociale*, undisturbed in its dogmatic aspirations by a Darwin or by an Einstein or by all the positivists of the twentieth century put together.

### VII

*Finally, skepticism is the opiate of the intellectual.*

If religion, as they say, is the opiate of the people, then assuredly skepticism is the opiate of the intellectual. Indeed, one might call

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it a superstition for the sophisticated, a piety for the spiritually introverted. This motif is explicit in Hellenistic skepticism from the very beginning, and continues in evidence throughout the evolution of that movement. The goal of the skeptic is a tranquillity of mind to be achieved through an attitude of indifference to all facts and values. One cannot help wondering if the modern positivists, with their acid annihilation of so many illusions in metaphysics and in theology, may not really be engaged in the same historic quest.

For in this cult there is to be found an end to striving and a surcease from sorrow. In the face of all the evil spirits that arise with their solicitations to love and to heroism and to suffering and to high endeavor, one has but to utter the magic formula of exorcism, "Begone, thou meaningless proposition!" and they vanish into nothingness. For those who take delight in the austere beauties of discourse, but who find a tedium in the homiletical development of moral platitudes, there is opportunity for the infinite, ceremonial elaboration of logical tautologies. While for those whose delight is in ritual, there may be numerological incantations without end, which, like the holy mystery of the mass, are delivered in a language which, by the multitude of the vulgar, is received with equal reverence and with equal incomprehension. Finally, for those whose discipline has prepared them for it, skepticism provides its moment of mystical ecstasy, when, rising above the realm of all vain definitions and futile distinctions, the quivering intellect finds itself at last transfixed by the pure dart of utter inanity, and then, tumbling back to earth from this beatific vision of the Void, rests for a while in delight ineffable and incommunicable.

And surely the sufficient skeptic is justified in his contempt for the otherworldliness of cruder superstitions; for he manages to live retired in another world even while he is in the midst of this world. And using reason to devour reason, he stills the gnawing hunger of his soul until at last he has found—the peace that passeth understanding!

## *Time Is*

B. R. McELDERRY, JR.

Time is a watch ticking, time is a calendar,  
Time is "Dear Diary," or the appointment book,  
Time is the airmail letter, the daylight trip from New York to L.A.,  
Time is the two-minute egg, the minute steak, the five-minute news-  
cast,

Time is a clock to punch, time is a whistle,  
Time is a train to catch, a connection missed,  
Time is a late Sunday breakfast, the second show,  
Time is a birthday, a holiday, a vacation,  
Time is a semester and Commencement,  
Time is a hot rod at ninety mph,  
Time is a radio program dropping out of the air,  
Time is a promise to pay in six easy installments,  
Time is an ambulance with siren blowing,  
Time is a burning house and no insurance,  
Time is payday,  
Time is soon, after while, when I can, tomorrow or day after tomorrow,  
Time is next year, when I come back, until death do us part,  
Time is a baby on the way,  
Time is ashes to ashes dust to dust.

Time is hello and good-bye—always on tiptoe.

## THE AUTHORS

(Continued from page 255)

**ERIC WILSON BARKER** ("The Prodigal") is the author of a volume of verse, *The Planetary Heart*, and of many poems not yet collected into volumes. An earlier contribution of his, "Night Swim," was printed in the Autumn 1950 *Pacific Spectator*. Mr. Barker lives in San Francisco. **MAX J. HERZBERG** ("Humor: Primalordial to Paradisal") has for years led a double life—as a teacher of English and school administrator on the one hand and as a newspaperman on the staff of *The Newark Evening and Sunday News* on the other. Nor has he ever been sure which is Dr. Jekyll and which Mr. Hyde in this dual role. He has compiled many anthologies, including one called *The Humor of America* and another entitled *This Is America*, the latter a recent Pocket Books issue. His book review section in *The Newark News* was listed last March as one of the twenty best in the country, in a series of awards made by the National Book Foundation.

**KENNETH OLIVER** ("The Study of Literature in a World at War") is professor of English and chairman of the English Department at Occidental College. Of his preparation for teaching—and incidentally for the writing of his present article—he says, "I began teaching languages: German, Latin, French, and Spanish in high school. . . . my Ph.D. minors were in French, German, and Spanish, and my major was in comparative literature. This is just a way of saying that I wanted

to get at literature first hand. . . ."

Mr. Oliver is the author of many articles. In 1950, he presented, by way of radio, a series of twenty-five lectures on the historical novel.

**HELEN PINKERTON** ("Deprivation") makes here her second appearance in *The Pacific Spectator*. An earlier poem, "That Time Survived: Point Lobos, 1950," was published in the Autumn 1950 issue.

**J. Y. BRYAN** ("Where Fulbright Is a Magic Name") has been with the American Embassy in Manila since 1948. He is treasurer of the United States Educational Foundation there, under which the Fulbright program is operated.

Mr. Bryan's writing has appeared in numbers of magazines, American and English, and his news features in the publications of many European and South American countries.

**MARJORIE BRAYMER** ("Reflections on Signing a Teachers' Loyalty Oath") herself both teacher and writer, puts into words the sense of a national past betrayed which now afflicts a host of public servants.

Other poems by Miss Braymer—"John Muir" and "Sierra Landscape"—were published in the Spring 1949 *Pacific Spectator*.

**JOHN LYDENBERG** ("Dos Passos and the Ruined Words"), now teaching at Scripps College, California, is a newcomer both to California and to *The Pacific Spectator*. Mr. Lydenberg has written for various periodicals, has taught in several Eastern colleges, and is at present at work (he says, "more theoretically than



## THE AUTHORS

actually") on a study of naturalism in American writing.

**LAWRENCE CLARK POWELL** ("Return to France"), whose "Music into Silence" appeared in the Winter 1951 *Pacific Spectator*, returned last month from England, where he had been at work during the year on a study of the British antiquarian book trade. His essay reports one of his brief holidays from work. At home, Mr. Powell is chief librarian at the University of California Library at Los Angeles and director of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, also at Los Angeles.

**ALVIN H. SCAFF** ("The Huk Revolt in the Philippines") says of the events he records, "These are events close to my own experience. I lived in guerilla territory during most of the first two years of the war, then was caught and interned at Santo Tomas and later sent to Los Banos Internment Camp. Since the war, I have followed events with an interest born out of this personal experience."

Mr. Scaff is now teaching at Pomona College. He is the author of "Humor and Morale in Internment Camps," published in *Social Forces* in 1948, and of other articles in sociological journals.

**WALTER BUCHANAN** ("The Nature of Rhythmic Talent") says of his special interests, academic and otherwise, "My hobbies are kayaks and the civilization of 6000 B.C. My professional interests are *a cappella* choral music. Lately I have become tremendously concerned with the de-

velopment of a consistent technique for the reading of vocal music at both beginning and advanced levels."

Mr. Buchanan teaches at Santa Barbara College, University of California. He is the author of a textbook and of several articles dealing with the technique of reading vocal music.

**LOVERNE BROWN** ("Lines for a Civilization in Search of a Scapegoat") is the author of "The Venomous Toadstool," published in the Summer 1950 *Pacific Spectator*. Her work has appeared in many other American magazines—"in about everything," she explains, "from *Poetry* to *The Saturday Evening Post*."

**GRANT H. REDFORD** ("The Day of the Child") teaches short story writing and playwriting at the University of Washington. His stories have appeared in a number of magazines. Apart from his interest in teaching and writing, he names a third preoccupation, shared, at the moment, by many of *The Pacific Spectator's* contributors—"I have three sons, the eldest of which is ten. In keeping with the madness of our time, and reflecting the jitters of coastal cities, I keep wondering if they will be around at draft age."

**ROSS LEE FINNEY** ("Music and the Human Need") is at present composer in residence at the University of Michigan. He is at once teacher, composer, and author, his latest book, *The Game of Harmony*, having appeared in 1947.

The essay here printed is one given

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as a speech at Scripps College in California. It is reproduced with the permission of the president of Scripps College and of the author.

**ROBERT E. FITCH** ("Skepticism and Social Action") publishes here his second article in *The Pacific Spectator*. His first, "Reinhold Niebuhr, 'Excubitor!'" appeared in the Summer 1950 issue.

As noted in the earlier *Spectator*, Mr. Fitch is professor of Christian ethics at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California, and is the author of many articles and of several books, the latest of which, *The Kingdom Without End*, a prophetic interpretation of history, was brought out by Scribner's last fall.

**B. R. McELDERRY, JR.** ("Time Is") is the author of "Henry James and *The Whole Family*," which appeared in the Summer 1950 *Pacific Spectator*. Mr. McElderry is professor of English literature at the University of Southern California. He has published many articles, chiefly in the field of contemporary

American literature. "Time Is" is his first published poem.

One of the readers of *The Pacific Spectator* questions the worth of the review of Stewart Holbrook's *The Yankee Exodus*, which appeared in the Spring 1951 issue, on the ground of its being inaccurate in a number of instances and therefore unfair. In order that those *Spectator* readers who are interested may make their own judgments, we list below page and volume references to four reviews of the book in question, two of them in popular and two in specialist magazines. The best reference of all, of course, is *The Yankee Exodus* itself, published, as was noted in our last issue, by Macmillan.

*New York Herald Tribune*,  
"Books," June 11, 1950

*Saturday Review of Literature*,  
June 10, 1950

*American Historical Review*, Jan-  
uary 1951

*U.S. Quarterly Book Review*, Sep-  
tember 1950



THIS twentieth issue is something special in the life of The Pacific Spectator. It marks the end of our fifth year of publication, and this is a matter for quiet editorial congratulation. Less happily, it also terminates the five-year period of editorship to which Edith Mirrieles has devoted herself, and from which she now claims a well-earned retirement. It is difficult for those of us who have been associated with her editorially during this period to state adequately how much her insight, tact, sympathy, and unfailing good humor and good judgment have meant to us and to the magazine. As we celebrate our fifth birthday we say good-bye to her with deep regret but also with the satisfaction which comes from having watched the Spectator grow, under her guidance, from an initial wild surmise into years of strength and accomplishment. As a matter of fact it is not good-bye that we say, for she will continue as a member of the Editorial Board, and her wisdom will be sought in the future as in the past.

We are pleased to be able to announce at the same time that the Spectator will now be in the managing-editorial hands of Robert Carver North. Mr. North is the author of the novel *Revolt in San Marcos*, which recently won the fiction award (and the gold medal) of the Commonwealth Club of California. He is also a research associate at the Hoover Library and is a specialist on China—particularly as concerns Soviet strategy and tactics in that country. He is admirably equipped to carry forward the tradition of the magazine into what Joseph Addison, editor of another well-known Spectator, would have called its second quinquennium.

It might not be amiss to express, just now, on behalf of those responsible for the Spectator, a very real warmth of gratitude to its readers for the encouragement and support which they have so cordially given it. We shall see that it continues to be deserved.

John W. Dodge

# THE PACIFIC

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**HAROLD R. ISAACS** ("The Blind Alley of Totalitarianism") is a correspondent, author, editor, and lecturer with many years of experience in Asia. He has been an associate editor of *Newsweek* and a Guggenheim Fellow, and is the author of *No Peace for Asia*, *New Cycle in Asia*, and *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, of which a revised edition has just been published. He was one of the first Westerners to analyze

the development of Chinese communism on the basis of documents as well as experience in China.

**ADRIENNE CECILE RICH** ("Seascape," "Good-bye to Roses") graduated from Radcliffe College in June. Born in Baltimore in 1929, she has already had poems published in several literary journals, and her book *A Change of World* appeared in the Yale "Younger Poets Series" for 1950. She expects to be working and writing in Cambridge, Massachusetts, during the coming year.



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**WALTER MORRIS HART** ("An Essay on Chit-Chat") is professor of English, emeritus, of the University of California at Berkeley, a one-time dean of the University, and a distinguished author of many years' standing. His writings include *Bal-lad and Epic—A Study in the De-velopment of the Narrative Art* and *Kipling, the Story Writer*. He has edited Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and has contributed papers on various phases of medieval literature.

**MILDRED WESTON.** ("Fugue for

Autumn") writes that she has just resumed academic studies after an abnormally long (twenty years') absence, and it is to this return that she attributes her recovery of a long diverted interest in verse writing. Her Master's thesis at Gonzaga Uni-versity, Spokane, was entitled "Va-chel Lindsay — Years in the North-west."

**WALLACE STEGNER** ("Literary Lessons out of Asia") returned re-cently from a round-the-world jour-

(Continued on page 497)

# THE BLIND ALLEY

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by *Harold R. Isaacs*

**T**OTALITARIANISM comes upon China, and threatens the rest of Asia, not as an unbidden evil but as a result of a history for which the Western world must bear the major responsibility. It results from the failure of Western society to open new channels of growth. This has been the failure to surmount the mortal crisis of Western national capitalism, to find a way for peoples to live together in some new, more productive, more peaceful system of world economy. It has been the failure to break down the confining and divisive barriers of national power, the failure to create the beginnings of a world order in which all, including Asia, could thrive.

We have had before us now for at least a generation the visible fact that the productive power generated by Western capitalism has outgrown the political and social institutions which nourished it, the fact that the nation-state has outgrown its usefulness and has become an obstacle in the path of the world's further development. The productive techniques and the inherently vital democratic ideas and institutions have limitless capacity for growth; but this growth is stifled and stunted within the persistently surviving national economic structure. The result has been a continuous state of crisis and frustration. Against this confining wall, peoples and nations have pushed and pressed, creating by their blind motion a variety of grotesque and terrifying shapes. Communist totalitarianism is one such shape. It is a symptom of our own disease, a product of our prolonged crisis.

There is such a thing in the lives of nations, as in the lives of individuals, as having to suffer the consequences of one's own acts. There is also such a thing as having the sins of the fathers visited upon the children, even unto the third and fourth generations. Alongside its productive techniques, Western industrial society produced

\* Abridged from chapter xix of *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, by Harold R. Isaacs; copyright 1951 by Stanford University Press.

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the beginnings of free political and social institutions. Responding to the expanding needs of its new economy, it also developed the antithesis of the democratic system; it built empires. The West imposed itself upon Asia and carved it, through a series of wars and invasions, into colonies or subject countries. It drew out of Asia all the wealth it could carry away, while allowing to Asia itself little or no benefit from the exploitation of its own resources.

The West tried to keep democratic institutions confined to the metropolitan homelands, while it ruled in Asia by brute force, pressing Asian politics into the molds of violence. White Europeans imposed a pattern of military, economic, legal, and racial superiority on brown and yellow Asians, breeding into each successive generation of subjects an implicit attitude of fear, hostility, and hatred. The Western nations, joined eventually by Japan, warred repeatedly against their victims and against each other, often on Asian soil and at Asian expense, first for spoils, ultimately for national survival. They failed to understand, much less surmount, the crises generated by their own social order. They plunged on from one unforeseen result to the next, from one bloody climax to another. Today they face the consequences.

Asian nationalism, generated in part at least by the seepage of Western libertarian ideas, eventually gathered within itself all the forces of reassertion in the subjected countries. Helped by the West's own self-destructive wars, it has pulled the structure of empire down. To the enormous task of building a new structure to take its place, nationalism comes with a legacy consisting of mass poverty, illiteracy, and ill-health, a bare minimum of economic development, and a pathetically small number of trained and educated people capable of taking on the tasks of government and of running the economy. It also comes into a world inhospitable to the growth of new nations and torn by conflicts paralyzing all efforts at peaceful construction and development.

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In sum, the Chinese and the other peoples of Asia were never given a chance to try to solve their problems by adapting and extending the productive techniques and the freer political and social institutions of the West. Instead they have been the victims of Western capitalism in its rise and in its fall; in the one case the objects of its expanding greed, its colonial conquests, and its one-way system of exploitation, and in the other case, the helpless casualties of its wars, its depressions, and its failure to replace its outworn national-economic structure with a new and more equitable and more workable system.

Russia, out of its backwardness and isolation and under the pressure of this same crisis, was drawn into the bleak horror of totalitarianism. China, straining to emerge from its backwardness and to come to grips with the enormous problems of its atomized economy and its swollen and pauperized population, is driven by the same anarchy to the same choice. The Chinese revolution of two decades ago was smothered in the embraces of the Western-sponsored Kuomintang dictatorship. The Russian-supported Communist dictatorship that has emerged from the subsequent years of conflict is now channeling the vigor of the country's youth and its people into the dark and high-walled passages of monolithic police-statism. The tragedy implicit in this vast movement of blind forces is not only China's tragedy. It is the West's tragedy, too.

European industrial civilization grew, in considerable measure, by feeding itself on the wealth and the weakness of Asia, and later of Africa as well. Thus it helped create and widen the immense disparity of economic development between Europe (and after it the United States) on the one hand, and the great Asian and African continents on the other. This disparity is one of the root causes of the crisis in human affairs now. Bridging it is the major task of the present century. Unsolved, this task imposes a state of chronic crisis upon our society. We have so far proved unequal to it and its pressure mounts and accumulates; hence the explosive, convulsive, bitter history of the last four decades.

Communist totalitarianism, paradoxically, is an outgrowth of



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one of the major efforts of our time to come to grips with this problem by revolutionary means. The older European socialist movement, which once embodied the hopes for a peaceful transformation of European capitalism into a socialist order, never came face to face with the gnawing problem of the colonies and the subject countries. This is one reason it failed to accomplish its aims. . . . The Russian Bolsheviks seized power in Europe's most backward nation. They saw their victory as the snapping of the capitalist-imperialist chain at its weakest link. Lenin saw the same process as possible in all the backward countries of the East. Again briefly, these ideas, brought into sharpened focus after the October Revolution, proposed in effect that backward countries, through their struggle against archaic autocracy (Russia) or for national liberation from colonial rule or domination (China, India) could skip over the stage of bourgeois capitalist development and move directly toward socialism along with the countries of the advanced West. This was, in Trotsky's phrase, the business of carrying out presocialist tasks by socialist methods. By taking this path, the backward countries would snap those "weakest links" in the structure of world imperialism and thereby help ignite or advance the socialist revolutionary cause in the metropolitan countries. This would be accomplished, finally, under the leadership of the urban proletariat, marching at the head of the peasant masses to carry out all the unfinished bourgeois, or presocialist, tasks and to telescope them with the advance into the socialist epoch.

This whole idea was predicated, however, on the belief in 1917 that the Western world would be swept by proletarian revolutions in country after country, joining Russia in building a new world. This is where, in the event, the original Bolshevik conception broke down. Contrary to Bolshevik expectations, capitalist power and institutions survived the first World War. This did not settle anything, for while Western capitalism failed to collapse, neither did it find a way of breaking out of its national-economic strait jacket. Hence the world plunged on from convulsion to convulsion, the depression of 1921, the rise of Fascist dictatorships, the onset of the

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greater world economic crisis in 1929, the new power challenge of Hitlerite Germany and militarist Japan, the catastrophic explosion of the second World War, the development and the emergence of totalitarian Russia as a major military force and as a new and more formidable claimant to world power.

The survival of the anarchic system of world imperialism similarly drove the colonies and subject countries of Asia into blind alleys. The efforts of subject peoples to win national independence were uniformly blocked in the years following the first World War. For a decade all of Asia, from India to Korea, was shaken by nationalist uprisings and revolutions. But none of them was yet quite strong enough, and none of the metropolitan powers quite weak enough, to bring about the changes already so long overdue. The inertia of the imperialist system prevailed. In its view, it could not allow the colonies to break their fetters without mortally damaging itself; it could make no place in its world for a new group of national-capitalist regimes. Once again, the path of "normal" development was blocked off. In China the revolution was derailed, with imperialist help, and the result was the docile Kuomintang dictatorship. Elsewhere in Asia, the colonial powers suppressed the national movements, holding on through the years of the depression, holding on more and more grimly even long after the profit had gone out of colonial exploitation. They kept on hoping for a return of better times until these hopes were blasted forever when interimperialist rivalries exploded once more in the Japanese war of 1941-45. A major result of this war was the collapse of most of the remaining structure of imperialist power in Asia. Country after country began to win degrees of formal national independence.

But the triumph of nationalism came late. This was the mid-twentieth, not the mid-nineteenth, century. The new nations of South Asia began almost at once to make the cruel discovery that national independence was not enough; the triumph of nationalism had taken place when nationalism, as such, was bankrupt. As nations, they had nowhere to go. In the absence of a functioning world order into which they could fit and thrive, they were doomed, as

separate nations, to stifle in frustration. This same frustration had already produced other grotesque results: the Kuomintang dictatorship, Nazi Germany, and totalitarian Russia itself were earlier samples of this same process. Now there were such outcomes as the rise of religious fanaticism as a major determinant in the politics of India: its "freedom" came in the form of partition on the basis of religious communities, amid hideous fratricidal violence. And there was the passage of China into the hands of a new Communist totalitarian dictatorship.

Actually nowhere in all this time did the elements envisaged in the Bolshevik formula of the law of combined development combine in the expected manner. Starting with Russia itself, these elements joined only in a pattern of irrational paradoxes and futile collisions, with great masses of people driving against the stubborn inertia of the past, being blunted and deflected, and being hurled back in opposite directions. The Leninist formula that endowed the urban proletariat of the backward countries with such great expectations likewise failed to find confirmation in events. In the first place, the Russian Revolution itself quickly lost its "proletarian" and "socialist" character. The new bureaucracy usurped the power that had been won in the proletariat's name and ruled thereafter in its own interests and by its own premises. These premises became the re-creation of Russia as a great national state, ultimately a power capable of dominating the globe. The Leninist formula never had a chance to be tested over again in the Chinese circumstances of the 'twenties. Russia intervened in China in search of a strong ally and to deal a blow to its British foes. It believed then that the propertied classes, not the workers, could bring this about, and it clung to them until they kicked themselves loose. It is conceivable that the new Chinese working class of that time might have played the role foreseen for it by Lenin and Trotsky and successfully completed the Chinese national revolution on its own terms. It is hardly possible to judge now whether it would have actually created the beginnings of a new urban-centered democracy in China, and whether it might have had the ameliorating effect on Russia



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on which Trotsky speculated. But this opportunity was at any rate lost in China and did not recur anywhere else.

Instead, in the next two decades, the relative importance of revolutionary ideas and popular movements declined in Russian eyes in direct proportion to the growth of Russian economic and military strength. Russia had been entirely, and sometimes desperately, dependent upon these ideas and movements for its survival. Now Russia began to pass into a position of military strength from which it could begin, more simply, to manipulate, exploit, and utilize them for its own national advantage. The international Communist movement had been subverted to serve the Russian need for a status quo in which it could build its own self-sufficiency. Now Russia became a military power. It played the game of power politics more cynically and more successfully than any other country. It survived the war, became a major power, and finally one of the two surviving Great Powers, intent upon expanding the new Soviet empire. The international Communist movement became now a tool in the service of Russian aggrandizement.

In the countries of eastern Europe that became part of the new Russian empire, the Communist parties were simply installed in power by direct action of the Russian army. Czechoslovakia was absorbed by a coup under the direct threat of near-by Russian military force. The process of consolidation was the complete yoking of the economy of these countries to Russian needs and Russian control. In the one country where the Communists had come to power by their own means, Yugoslavia, resistance to this process developed, and within three years it had to try to find a precarious place for itself just outside the Russian orbit.

In China, the Communist movement had already fashioned itself into an instrument for the conquest of power by military force. Its victory was generated, certainly, by its own strength and by the ripening of the crisis in China. But its actual conquest of power was the result of military action in which the great mass of people simply acquiesced. The Russian Communist party had taken years to develop into a self-sufficient power mechanism; the Chinese Com-



munist party assumed power already fully formed as a party-military dictatorship, free of any organic limitation through democratic responsibilities or institutions rooted in the people, or for that matter, in any single class. Once it moved into the vacuum created by the collapse of the Kuomintang, it passed over quickly to the consolidation of its power by open terror. Its "independent" character, as well as considerations of geography and size, gave this new adjunct of the Russian empire a place of its own in the new scheme, a junior partnership, or a subempire, if you will, for Asia. The relationship between Communist China and Russia, as we have already pointed out, will be neither simply nor easily established. It will assume its own shape out of the interplay of Russian and Chinese interests. But for the long time being, this will be an evolution taking place within the context and the logic of the Soviet empire itself.

Thus the Communist revolutionary conception, which began as a bold approach to the problems of the world crisis through popular revolutionary renovation of all social relations, had been transformed in these two decades into the historical reality of a power mechanism, the party dictatorship, exploiting the social and economic crisis, subverting popular revolutionary aspirations and energies, establishing power primarily by military means, and maintaining itself by crushing all dissent. Finally, the original notion of a new international comity of peoples had been transformed into the reality of a new Russian empire; the business of building a brave new world became the business of expanding the periphery of Russian national power.

The irony of this totalitarian pattern, and perhaps the ultimate root of the self-destruction within it, is the fact that its attractive power, particularly in Asia, still lies in its revolutionary premises. By its success, and its promise of further success, it has acquired a hold on many Asians who see both in non-Communist nationalism and in Western capitalism nothing but persistently futile reaction and anarchy. What they believe, however, is that along this road they can realize full national independence and the beginning of an

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effective economic transformation. The difficulty is that the logic of totalitarianism violates its revolutionary premises; the logic of the new Russian totalitarian imperialism must deny to its satellites, even more so than the old Western imperialism, their freedom as peoples and their chance for economic development. Totalitarianism is another blind alley.

It is perfectly true that the Communist power drive in Asia is able, thanks to the acuteness of the power struggle, to direct itself against the popular target of Western influence. It has been able in many countries to absorb, or to superimpose itself upon, the emotions aroused by nationalism, to present itself as the only true and the most thoroughgoing opponent of the hated colonialism and its surviving remnants. Beyond this, it is both ready and able to strike boldly at the old landlordism, the old system of usury, and the rest of the outworn social and economic relations requiring change and replacement. Such are the inescapable tasks of the revolutions in Asia, and the Communist movement acquires vitality largely because it is ready to carry them out with speed and ruthlessness. It is left to make the revolutions that have to be made where there is no one else who will make them. It promises to sweep away the old and to replace it with the new, and the new bears the glitteringly successful image of the new Russian superstate. Did not Russia transform itself by these means in a single generation from one of the most backward nations of Europe into a major world power?

But the fact is that the Russian experience will not and cannot be reproduced on Asian soil; the Russian empire itself makes that impossible. There is no telling what incalculable travail Asia may have to pass through before this lesson is learned, especially if no more fruitful alternative is forthcoming in good enough time. But the facts are there. To begin with, Russia embarked upon its new career with a far more advanced degree of industrial development and a far greater volume and variety of natural resources than any country in Asia. Only these made possible the limited degree of industrial self-sufficiency that Russia eventually attained. But these

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were not enough in themselves; Russia had to buy time. It bought time, three decades of it, in which to carry out the expansion of its economic and military power. It bought this time mainly with the sweat and blood of its people, out of whom it extracted the surplus it used on the world market to acquire the capital goods without which its development would have been impossible. Its volume of trade in the interwar years, despite all its disabilities, ran into billions of rubles. Later, by virtue of the twisting circumstances and paradoxes of the war, it received an aggregate of some \$13,000,000,000 in military and industrial supplies from the United States, Great Britain, and other Western allies. These enabled it, in decisive degree, to survive the war. Finally, after the war, it acquired its eastern European empire, from which it has extracted further billions in new capital wealth. Russia also bought this time at the expense of the revolutionary movement elsewhere, expending one pawn after another: the French working-class movement of the 'thirties, the Spanish Revolution, the German working-class movement. The results for Europe were disastrous; for Russia they were spectacular.

The new Russian empire that has emerged from this history stands now not as an example for those who follow it, but as master of all who do so. This is an enormously different matter. The eastern European satellites have served in the main as a source of supply for Russia's economy, and as pawns in the international power struggle. For them the new dispensation has not been one of new growth but of intense Russian exploitation of their resources. Their independence as nations has been extinguished. Purge after purge has disposed of the latent national feelings that flickered up, time after time, even within the puppet Communist parties.

Neither China nor any other nation that might be sucked into the Russian orbit in Asia has the resources with which to attempt to achieve anything like the degree of self-sufficient economic development realized in Russia. But even if they had, they would be unable to buy time as Russia bought it, or to maneuver vis-à-vis their Western foes as Russia maneuvered. Russia's needs take precedence



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and these needs are concentrated to an acute degree on waging the struggle for power against the United States. The manner in which Russia played its Korean pawn, and involved China in a war it could not afford, is already a case in point.

No new regime ever more clearly or more desperately needed time than the new Communist regime in China, time to heal the wounds of decades of war, time to begin coping with the staggering accumulation of the country's problems. It had to try first to restore the production it once had, and then to create new production. For this China needed not only the utmost mobilization of its own people and resources. It also clearly needed access to large foreign credits, running into billions, and large-scale technical assistance. It needed, at the very least, a resumption of foreign trade with countries from which it could begin to get the capital goods it had to have. Tragically for China, its absorption into the Russian power sphere meant that it would get neither the time nor the means to begin meeting its needs.

Russia is certainly not a source of supply of capital goods on any serious scale. Far from becoming a source of supply for China or for any of its satellites, Russia is intent upon creating an empire to serve as a source of supply for itself. It is draining from all the areas under its control all the wealth and goods it can extract, everything from screws and bolts to whole plants, every item of equipment, small and large, capable of contributing to the further upbuilding of Russia's industrial and war machine. By its own methods, Russia is engaged in the primitive accumulation of capital, and its whole economic strategy is geared to this fundamental purpose. It drew billions in reparations and outright loot from eastern Europe. It imposed upon its satellites a system of "joint" exploitation of major industrial resources and enterprises and a pattern of trade lopsidedly favorable to Russia. It has not only managed to acquire at prices favorable to itself the satellite goods directly useful to Russia but also adopted the practice of functioning as broker, absorbing the major exports of its satellites and reselling what it does not need itself, squeezing maximum profits for itself in this way both



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from the intersatellite trade and from the East-West trade across the borders of its empire.

This was the system extended to China. The Russian military occupation of Manchuria was used to carry out a wholesale dismantling of the most important Manchurian industrial plants. Trainload after trainload of machinery and other equipment rolled back across the frontier into Russia as "war booty." The heaviest concentration of industrial development in China was stripped down. An official American mission which inspected the results estimated the loss to China's economy at \$2,000,000,000. At the other extreme, the Russians said the equipment they took was valued at \$95,000,000. But the blow to Manchurian industry was obviously a crippling one. The Chinese Communists were able later to restore some measure of production in Manchuria, and their treaty with Russia included a clause which could be interpreted as a Russian promise to return the looted equipment, but this, so far as is known, has not taken place.

The treaty signed in February 1950 also provided for a Soviet credit to China of \$300,000,000, spread over five years, for the purchase of industrial equipment. This figure was small enough in itself, smaller even than the credit similarly extended by Russia to Poland. But given the terms of trade imposed by Russia, it seemed likely that even this modest sum would be translated into little more than a trickle of hard goods for China. The system of "joint" enterprises was also introduced in subsequent agreements and likewise the practice of funneling exports into Russia for resale. During 1950 Russia appeared on the European market as a seller of Chinese pig-bristles and other products. At the same time, the Russians successfully created an international atmosphere which steadily whittled down China's trade with the West, particularly with the United States, and all but eliminated any surviving opportunity China had to operate on the world market in a way that would best suit its own national economic interests. The ultimate effect has been to place the Chinese increasingly in a position of complete dependence on Russia.

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Given time, it is at least conceivable that even this relationship might begin eventually to produce some economic advantages for China. Even a trickle of assistance might enable China to hang on if there was the prospect of a greater flow later on. But it is precisely the element of time which is lacking. In the acuteness of the world power struggle created primarily by Russia's aggressive expansionism there is no time for an underdeveloped satellite to buy. Within less than a year after it came into being, the Communist regime in China was forced into a position where it was not only prevented from making any serious attempt to begin developing new economic resources but had to begin expending the resources it had in the service of Russian strategic purposes. This was the effect of the war launched in Korea by Russia's North Korean satellite army in June 1950.

Korea had been victimized by one of the crueler wartime deals between the Great Powers. For military purposes it had been partitioned, cut in half at the thirty-eighth parallel. When Japan surrendered, the Russians occupied the north and the Americans the south. With the unfolding and the sharpening of the new Russian-American power struggle, this line hardened into a frontier, imposing upon the body of Korea a dismemberment it could not abide. Both sets of occupation forces were eventually withdrawn but not until the Russians had created in their zone a puppet Communist government and army and the Americans had brought into being in their zone an ineffectual, conservative, police-ridden republic. Every effort by the United States and later the United Nations to negotiate the unification of the country on the basis of general elections was frustrated by the Russians. When the build-up of armed force in North Korea had progressed far enough, the Russians undertook to unify the country on their terms and complete its total absorption into the Russian sphere by sending the North Korean army across the partition line in a full-scale military invasion on June 25, 1950. The United States, and after it the United Nations, met force with force. The result was a war that not only tragically reduced Korea itself to a shambles but brought the onset of a third world

war perilously close. When the American and United Nations forces drove the North Koreans back across the parallel and approached the Manchurian frontier in November, Communist China moved its armies across the border and drove the United Nations armies south again. The hostilities seesawed up and down the peninsula, reducing most of it to rubble and culminating, by the spring of 1951, in a grisly stalemate that was immensely costly to both sides.

There were undoubtedly mixed motives in the Chinese Communist intervention in Korea. The advance of a predominantly American army up the Korean peninsula toward the Manchurian frontier could and did look to the Communist rulers in Peking like a threat to their new regime. It was not difficult for them to summon up memories of the Western Allied interventions in Russia after 1918 or the far more recent American efforts to bolster the Kuomintang in the civil war. The Korean developments also gave them an opportunity to move large forces back from China proper into Manchuria, redressing, possibly, the balance of Chinese and Russian influence in that key region. A great deal remains to be learned about the mutual relations of the Russians, the Chinese, and the North Koreans in these events. The facts about intratotalitarian frictions and pressures in the affair remained obscurely hidden. But the big overriding fact was visible enough. For the purposes of a tactical operation in the waging of the power struggle, the Russians were able to use first the North Koreans and then the Chinese. . . . Over the entire episode hovered the specter of a third world war, starting on the Korean battlefields and going no man could know where, but certainly not in a direction that could serve the interests of the Asian peoples involved.

In sum, the Chinese Communist regime needed to embark upon a major economic effort and needed to win a long respite of time in which to make it. Its absorption into the Russian totalitarian sphere compelled it to surrender Chinese needs and interests to the greater demands of the world power struggle, to cut itself off from Western sources of economic assistance, to subject itself to Russia's economic and strategic requirements, and more, to enter almost immediately

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into a conflict with the West in circumstances of Russia's choosing. Internally, the result was a tightening of the bonds of the Communist dictatorship. To cope with their economic problems and to meet the additional strains created by the Korean war, the [Chinese Communist] regime had no alternative but to move from one harsh expedient to another. The initial flush of broad popular support it first enjoyed faded away. The dictatorship had to assert its power against the reassertion of dissatisfaction and dissent. The result was the beginning of the mass purges and executions throughout China in the spring of 1951. The dictatorship's choice, Mao Tsê-tung had said, was "either to kill the tiger or to be eaten by him." The Chinese Communist regime began killing tigers and will have to keep on doing so to keep itself in power. What this will mean for China and what form it will give China's pressure on the rest of Asia remains to be seen. But one thing is certain: at the end of the blind alley of totalitarianism there is no outlet to greater freedom or peaceful growth. There is nothing but self-destruction or the darkness of a new barbarian epoch. . . .

*"The one important part of the political line of the Chinese Communist Party is the alliance with and also the struggle against the middle class . . . By alliance we mean a united front. By struggle we mean a "peaceful" and "bloodless" struggle ideologically, politically and organizationally during the alliance, which turns to an armed struggle when we are forced to break with the middle class."*

MAO TSE-TUNG, *The Communists*, October 4, 1939



## *Seascape*

ADRIENNE CECILE RICH

I sent a sea gull on an errand once  
Too high for hawks, beyond the usual blue  
Of seaward travel, into sterner zones  
To do a thing it was not built to do.

That flash of grey, those finely cruising feathers  
Will not again sail down to seek my hand.  
That quick mercurial beauty glides the sunlight  
Toward other masters it can understand.

Others have stroked and kept their captives; I,  
Watching in air my unreturning bird,  
Wonder again what fate it was of mine  
To speak that hard and most exacting word.

# AN ESSAY ON CHIT-CHAT\*

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by *Walter Morris Hart*

CHIT-CHAT, if one may trust the Oxford dictionary, is "light chat," *chat* meaning "familiar and easy talk or conversation"—an elastic definition, for there are degrees of ease, of lightness, of familiarity. For further description, Dr. Johnson's definition of the *Essay* may serve: "A loose sally of the mind; an irregular and indigested piece; not . . . an orderly composition."

It should be stated at the outset that it is not possible to write convincingly of chit-chat. One desiring to "be shown" must be disappointed. What is said he must take on faith, as, if he had never seen daffodils, he would have to take on faith what Shakespeare, Herrick, Wordsworth, and Austin Dobson have to say about them. For chit-chat proceeds so rapidly and planlessly that it is difficult to remember its general movement or the wise or witty things that may have been said in the course of it. "A chiel amang you takin' notes" would destroy its ease and freedom. Moreover, what is said may be good only for the moment, requiring the whole atmosphere, the minds, conscious or subconscious, of those present, to give it life and color, fading as bright pebbles do when one takes them from the sea. Yet the life and color are the reality.

Conversation, through the ages, has been associated with food and drink. "Our fathers," says Cato, in Cicero's *De Senectute*, "did well in calling the reclining of friends at feasts a *convivium* because it implies a communion of life, which is a better designation than that of the Greeks, who call it sometimes an 'eating together' and sometimes a 'drinking together.'"—The English *companion* is one with whom one breaks bread; the Anglo-Saxon *beodgeneat* means "table companion."—"I am profoundly grateful to old age," Cato continues, "which has increased my eagerness for conversation, and taken away that for food and drink." Yet—"I enjoy cups . . . that are small in size, filled with dew-like drops, cooled in sum-

\* This essay was first read before the Chit-Chat Club of San Francisco.

mer, and, in winter, warmed by the heat of the sun or fire." (Some may see in these forerunners of the modern cocktail the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.) Cato liked to join his neighbors "in a social meal which we protract as late as we can into the night with talk on varying themes." The sense of leisure here implied means much for the ease of talk. "Conversation is one of the greatest pleasures of life, but it wants leisure," wrote Somerset Maugham.

Food and drink provide a reason for coming together. Talk must seem a by-product. A gathering for conversation alone would be likely to defeat its own end. Food and drink require a table; seated about it the talkers can all see and hear one another, so that general conversation is possible.

For this, the company must not be too large. Bliss Perry thinks that eight is the ideal number; and it may well be, if there are frequent meetings so that each may have his share of talking and listening. Those who hold forth may be led to surpass themselves by the presence of the others. There are those who hold that talk is at its best when only four are present, when, as in a string quartet, each with his special instrument makes his contribution, accompanied, as it were, by the silent but lively cerebration of the other minds; yet, unlike the musicians, requiring no audience.

However, so long as the talk is general, not *how many* but *who* is the important question.

Cicero, writing *De Senectute*, was thinking of old men. Cato was eighty-four. It is true that the "bull sessions" of undergraduates, with their sense of fresh discovery, are more animated than the interchange of their seniors. And in the confrontation of wit and wisdom that are "dated" and wit and wisdom that are "up to date," crabbed age and youth—or should we say, rather, naïve old age and sophisticated youth?—may, if there is mutual tolerance, briefly live together. However, advancing years do, generally as with Cato, increase eagerness for conversation. Old men have had opportunity to observe more of life; like Odysseus, they have seen the towns of many men and learned to know their minds. In business or profession or social intercourse they have advanced in what Stevenson called the "Science of the Aspects of Life." They

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have some leisure—time for solitary contemplation or speculation. Less concerned with doing things, they find increasing pleasure in talking about them. Much of their thinking is an intending to mention this or that to a friend, or it is a continuation of remembered talk, a rearrangement, perhaps, of things that stay in their minds, a playing with them to make something interesting or amusing. Thus chit-chat, whether in prospect or in retrospect, leads along many paths in the wanderings of thought. "The man who talks to unburden his mind," said Dr. Johnson, "is the man to delight you," and, we may add, to delight himself as well.

Contrast with him the solitary watcher over a dam, found by Thoreau in the Maine woods. "For want of other employment [he] spent his time tossing a bullet from one hand to the other. . . . This bandying to and fro a leaden subject seems to have been his symbol for society."

Chat is "familiar and easy talk." And talk is most likely to be familiar and easy if it is talk among friends. Holmes, in the *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, stoutly defends the "Mutual Admiration Society," but it is not necessary to go so far. What is essential is mutual stimulation; without that, the best of talkers may remain silent. "Sir," said Boswell to his friend Erskine, "when you and I get into a dispute, we give a sharp rap against each other, and out fly sparks of fire. But Macfarlane and you come together like two thick-quilted chair-bottoms, and out comes a cloud of dust. . . ." "Yes," said Erskine, "you extract more out of me than anybody."

Ease and familiarity are greatest, naturally, where there is mutual affection, carrying with it a pleased recognition of endearing imperfections, of idiosyncrasies, of reactions grown familiar through years of intercourse; mention of a certain subject leading inevitably to an anecdote known and welcome as an old friend. "A gentleman," said Austin O'Malley, "never heard a story before."

In these circumstances it is easy to be a gentleman, to rejoice that the old friend has not changed.

However, talk with mere acquaintances, or with strangers, with men of races other than one's own, also has its satisfactions. What is more stimulating than the sudden discovery of some common



interest or enthusiasm, some unexpected understanding of an alien point of view! "To speak with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men" is, thought Stevenson, a truly useful art.

There are, it seems, men who are unaware that there is such a thing as talk, who, falling among talkers, suppose themselves to be in a committee meeting or conference, with purpose to "thresh out" a subject, reach a decision. Or they see only an opportunity to persuade or edify. Or, like Lord Acton, see an opportunity to instruct. He, says Quiller-Couch, "knew everything, and would tell you everything you didn't want to know with a finality that killed conversation. Sort of . . . vulpicide posted on the edge of a covert and promptly shooting dead every fox you put up."\*

There are those who know that talk *is*, but dislike it because it gives pleasure; or distrust it as being the "hare-brained chatter of irresponsible frivolity," as Disraeli puts it. As with other games, it is a matter of opinion or taste: Kipling wrote of "the flannelled fools at the wicket, the muddled oafs at the goal"; but Wellington, it is said, declared that Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton.

There are those who prefer the radio, or moving pictures, or television.

And naturally, in a police state, or in a community given to witch hunting, familiar intercourse, easy, unrestrained, irresponsible, cannot flourish.

Of those who love to talk, the best are those who delight, not merely to talk well themselves, but also to stimulate good talk in others. I recur to the young Boswell, aged twenty-two. He records that when Johnson, aged fifty-three, and Goldsmith, thirty-two, were his guests at dinner, he "behaved with ease and propriety . . . and gently assisted conversation by those little arts which serve to make people throw out their sentiments with ease and freedom."

When only a few old friends are concerned, each one instinctively makes use of Boswell's "little arts." All are affable men—"easy to be spoken to," "courteous in responding to the conversa-

\* F. Brittain, *A. Quiller-Couch*, p. 117.

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tion or address of others." Not lacking in sense of humor, they can make and take a joke.

They are good listeners, *looking* interested, putting in a word now and then, flattering by quoting what the others once said. Their talk is not a contest; there may be emulation, but there is not more than the slightest tone of rivalry. They co-operate in keeping the talk alive, in some measure directing it, avoiding the Charybdis of dull trivialities and the Scylla of controversy. They may play the part of Macaulay, who, said Sydney Smith, "has occasional flashes of silence, that make his conversation perfectly delightful."

For affable men, talk is not an argument to be won. Thus Sir Thomas More, engaged in discussion with scholars from Cambridge or Oxford, when he perceived that they could not hold out against him, would rather seem conquered than discourage them, and "by some device, courteously break off into some other matter and give over."\*—"The true spirit of conversation," said Bulwer Lytton, "consists in building on another man's observation, not in overturning it."

Affable men are men of open mind. They are willing to play with ideas, however absurd these may seem. Somewhat less affable are men with minds half open, the literal minded. Quote to one of these Anatole France on the majestic equality of French laws, "which forbid rich and poor alike . . . to beg in the streets," and your literal-minded man will explode with righteous indignation: "They call that equality!" Yet he does little harm; he is a problem to be dealt with; he must be tactfully enlightened and appeased. He is amusing to remember.

J. Robert Oppenheimer wrote of *The Open Mind*: "The problem of doing justice to the implicit, the imponderable, and the unknown is always with us in science; it is with us in the most trivial of personal affairs, and it is one of the great problems of all forms of art." It is with us, then, in the art of conversation, of chit-chat. The mind must be open to consideration of "the most trivial of personal affairs." It will be open to *gossip* in the more favorable sense of that word—"easy, unrestrained talk especially about persons or

\* Roper's *Life of More*, p. 28.

social incidents." Though good talk is generally impersonal, it may on occasion deal with personal matters of universal significance, like, for example, old age. With talk of this sort Plato begins *The Republic*. "I had not seen [Cephalus] for a long time," says Socrates, "and I thought him very much aged." Yet, to Cephalus he says: "I should like to ask of you who have arrived at that time which the poets call the 'threshold of old age,' — Is life harder toward the end, or what report do you make of it?"

Cephalus in his reply mentions wealth as alleviating the discomforts of old age and enabling a man to pay all his just debts. "Is this then justice," asks Socrates, "to pay your debts and tell the truth?" The transition, it is true, is a little abrupt, but in all that precedes, the talk has the desultory progress of actual conversation. In this it may be contrasted with the manifestly planned development of Xenophon's *Symposium*. The naturalness of Plato's dialogue has an air of realism, permitting, as it seems, an authentic glimpse of the manners and way of life of these Athenian gentlemen—their gentle irony, their fine and considerate urbanity.

I have relied on Jowett's translation. The passage must be far more effective for one who is familiar with the Greek words, fully aware of their denotation and connotation. For talk is at its best among those who have an ear for verbal delicacies, for the way of saying a thing no less than for the thing said, words being for them the money of wise men. Johnson was pleased to find, on review, that his conversation as recorded by Boswell teamed with point and imagery. "On review" is significant. He was not aware at the moment of the good things he said; he had not planned to say them. They may well have been inspired by Boswell's "little arts." At such moments, it seems, inspiration is at work. Often, I am told, the man who says a good thing is as much surprised as those who hear him. He may be betrayed into laughing at his own joke, for it does not seem to be his own; he cannot tell whence it comes; our familiar phrase, "it occurred to me" implies the mystery. Homer would say that the God put it into his mind—only it does not seem to have been in his mind at all. There is doubtless mutual stimulation, not so much a striking of sparks as an atmosphere of genial warmth.



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To be led to say good things is, I can imagine, one of the special pleasures of lively talk. Cervantes goes so far as to maintain that "to say and write witty and amusing things is the mark of great genius."

Mutual stimulation and mutual understanding are, apparently, particularly agreeable in the exchange of words that mean something more and something other than they seem to. Members of a group grasping hidden meanings, finding themselves together "in the know" (wickedly conscious, it may be, that others are excluded), aware of ironic implications, appear to enjoy a special sense of fellowship. It was perhaps in Philadelphia, before a luncheon at which Lord Morley was to speak, that the president of the local branch of the English-Speaking Union was introduced to him. Lord Morley manifestly had never heard of that organization. He said: "Ah, it is always a pleasure to hear good English."

"We are looking forward to that pleasure this afternoon," the other replied."

Just what was in the mind of either speaker it is impossible to say. But it is clear that "words of praise were spoken to imply blame,"\* and that each was aware of the other's intention. It is fair to assume that both found pleasure in a sense of mutual—of international—understanding. Good talk may well have followed.

On occasion, talk may be enlivened by a special form of irony, "the simulation of ignorance." A writer in the *Atlantic Monthly*, noting some differences between English and American conversation, states that "one of the characteristics of American humor, shared with no other country, is the willingness to become a fool to save a party."† Negative generalizations are dangerous. I am not sure that this habit is exclusively American. An Englishman with a friend in Rome between the two wars "pointed innocently to the Colosseum and said, 'What is that?' We told the guide we thought the building was in a very bad state of repair. When he told us that hundreds of early Christians had been martyred there, we asked, Why?"‡ The word *innocently* confirms the surmise that these

\* Thrall and Hibbard, *A Handbook to Literature*.

† Ann Leighton, "Conversation," August 1949.

‡ *Blackwood's*, 1950, p. 269.



Englishmen had been reading *Innocents Abroad* — the very title suggesting this type of humor. Mark Twain, it will be remembered, when shown statues of Columbus and other worthies, pretended to lose interest on learning that they were dead. Clearly, those who play the fool, confident that they are not fools, enjoy, like the ironists, a sense of superiority—reprehensible, doubtless, yet comprehensible.

“Simulation of ignorance” is a definition of Socratic irony. It is true that Socrates practiced it for the purpose of confusing an adversary. Our modern instances, however, may be regarded as a lighter and less purposive form of the same device, with intention, not to confute, but to amuse. And even of Socrates it has been suggested that “his irony originated in his sense of humor . . . and is not to be regarded as a mere dialectic trick.”†

Akin to simulation of ignorance to stimulate talk is willingness to take the wrong side. “Sir, there is nothing that you may not muster up some plausible arguments for. Why there, now, is stealing; why should it be considered a crime? When we consider by what unjust methods property has been acquired, and that what was unjustly got it must be unjust to keep, I see no harm in one man’s taking the property of another from him. Besides, when we consider the bad use that many people make of their property and how much better use the thief would make of it, I think it is a very allowable practice.”

Johnson’s argument for stealing is a variety of the Vague Generality, which, said George Ade, “is for parlor use, a Life-Saver,” as when a moment’s silence seems to a hostess to menace the success of her party. Yet she may misinterpret the silence; it may be caused, not by a dearth of ideas, but by a wealth so great that it is difficult to choose between them. Then the Life-Saver is not welcome.

However, whether as anxious hostess or genuinely interested listener, woman often plays an important part in the development of talk. Her mere presence may be effective. I have seen it lead men ordinarily taciturn to display unwonted eloquence or wit, much as the males among our feathered friends display the gay

† Thrall and Hibbard, p. 417.

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plumage provided by nature for that purpose. Her subtle flattery may have the stimulating and inhibition-destroying effect of a cocktail. It was said of Mrs. Bell, daughter of Rufus Choate: "The secret of her catholic taste was a real sympathy. As you talked with her you knew that she was the most brilliant woman in the world and you felt that you were a close second."\*

Men as well as women may be guilty of making premature and unwelcome change in the subject of talk. They may be called the Centrifugals: they tend to fly off from the center. Yet they may be friends and promoters of chit-chat. Like the umpire who tosses out a new ball when the old one has been batted over the left-field fence for a home run, they find new topics when the old ones are put out of play. At their best, they are persons of wit in the eighteenth-century sense of "a social grace that gives pleasure," defined by Locke as "an agreeable assemblage of ideas, ability to see comparisons."†

The Centrifugals find themselves in conflict with the Centripetals, who tend toward the center. They cannot be easily diverted from a subject. They restrain the excessive flitting of the Centrifugals, when it appears that "thoughts are not running in the natural order or sequence."

If the Centrifugals have their way, talk ceases to be interesting; if the Centripetals have theirs, it becomes serious discussion.

The conflict may be illustrated by a confession of my own defeat in it. Two clergymen were discussing at a dinner party the division of the Congregationalists in China. At length, one spoke of translations of the Bible, and I asked abruptly and ineptly enough—for "questioning is not the mode of conversation among gentlemen," as Dr. Johnson said—I asked if they knew that story of Kipling's in which it appears that Shakespeare had a hand in the King James version. My neighbor looked at me with the tolerant smile of one accustomed to suffer fools gladly. "I fear," he said, "that there is no evidence for that view." My mind wandered away from the Congregationalists in China to Shakespeare's imagined

\* Quoted by Ferris Greenslet, *Under the Bridge*, p. 79.

† Thrall and Hibbard, p. 464.

comments on Isaiah. But presently I was aware that the divine across the table was describing a child's drawing depicting two people in a limousine driven by a uniformed chauffeur. "That is God," the child artist explained, "driving Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden." My neighbor failed to repeat, "I fear that there is no evidence for that view," and I, most fortunately, did not think of it until the next day.

More threatening to the progress of talk than Centrifugal or Centripetal is the monologist, "one that loves to have all the talk to himself."\* Evelyn Waugh seems to think of him as a peculiarly American character, and had apparently encountered him when he wrote: "Americans seem to listen very little. They talk brilliantly and wisely, with deep knowledge and apt illustration, and I think, looking round the table, how lucky we are to be here. And looking round I notice on every face except the speaker's, a rapt, nun-like expression. They are paying no attention at all. Surely here is an amenity of living with which the citizens' forum might concern itself? All good conversation depends on timing and agility, not on the importance of the subject. Each contribution must be sharply apropos and must develop the theme. To insure that, keen attention is necessary."† Conceivably, those about the table may have grown tired listening; monologists among them may have been busy composing their own remarks. And it is said that "When monologist meets monologist mutual admiration rarely results."‡ Even if his monologue is more interesting than the talk, it is something else. A violin solo may be an inspired performance, but it is not a string quartet. However, if he is tactfully dealt with, the monologist may add to the pleasure. He is an obstacle to be overcome, like the hazards in golf.

No host or hostess, no Boswell, can really control the course of chit-chat. It takes its own way. It cannot be planned. Its progress is essentially desultory, a "skipping about, flitting from one thing to another."§ It is the product of the several minds, the result of

\* *O.E.D.*, s.v. "Monologist."

† "The Amenities in America," *Atlantic Monthly*, January 1949, p. 80.

‡ *Athenaeum*, 1882, quoted in *O.E.D.*, s.v. "Monologist."

§ *O.E.D.*, s.v. "Desultory."



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a kind of communal composition, as primitive poetry has been thought to be. It expresses the stream of consciousness of a group, the common stream, from which individual minds continually wander, to which they continually return.

It is difficult to remember the wayward course of any conversation. One, perhaps, I can in part recall and reconstruct. It is by no means the best that I have heard. And in a five-minute condensation of an hour's chit-chat it is not possible to recapture the charm that it then seemed to have. However, it may serve as an example of the desultory progress of talk.

It began with that always stimulating subject, the weather. The day, happily, led someone to quote Henry James to the effect that to him *summer afternoon* had always been the most beautiful words in the English language. It was suggested that beautiful words are always the names of beautiful things. Sir Gilbert Norwood, Greek scholar from Toronto, was present. He disagreed: to his mind the most beautiful word in English was *cellar-door*. No doubt, said one, he was thinking of the late Greek romance of *Cellardoor and Cellophane*. He professed to have a preference for the pronunciation cellóphanë. But he made no converts. Cellophane was a perfect name for a hero—transparent, tough, and protective, as men are. And Cellardoor, in addition to its musical sound, implied the mystery and many hidden beauties of the heroine's character. Another thought the names appropriate, but the other way about. The protective impulse is a phase of the maternal instinct, more active with women than with men; and they are more transparent. Cellardoor suggests the forbidding male exterior—like that of Socrates, whose "outer mask was the carved head of Silenus; but when he is opened, what temperance there is residing within." Not all were prepared to agree—differences between men and women! In the *Screwtape Letters*, someone recalled, the Devil observes that the unselfishness of women consists in going about doing good; the unselfishness of men, in not meddling in other people's business. Just here, someone reminded us that there are, in the United States, a million and a half more women than men; the average American is a woman. "And that," said he, "accounts for our foreign policy."



Momism declares that this is one world and we are its mother." "But how about Russia?" another protested. "Russia would confer on all of us the blessings of communism. And you can't accuse Russia of Momism." "Certainly I don't accuse Russia of unselfishness," said the other.

There was a moment of silence. All, it seemed, were dismayed at the prospect of a passionate rehearsal of matters grown only too familiar. And all were relieved, I imagine, when someone said, not quite relevantly, "Speaking of parties: what was it Schweitzer said about the compulsion to join them?"

The talk went on, happily about Schweitzer. Beginning with the weather, it had, by short and natural steps, obviously unplanned, arrived as talk now too often does, at world affairs, a destination wholly unforeseen, a way station or junction, not a terminal. Familiar and easy talk, loose sallies of the mind, disorderly and indigested, tending to grow more serious, as it did with Socrates and his friends at the Piraeus, moving from matters of perennial interest, like the weather, to matters of passing interest, like Russia.

It was talk for talk's sake, a pleasure, an end in itself. Yet, for those who in general think highly of means and disapprove of ends, it may be admitted that chit-chat is sometimes not without values. Some of these I have inadvertently, or inevitably, suggested. For others, I call in experts.

Winston Churchill says of a Kremlin dinner: "On such an occasion many of the private interchanges which occur bring about that atmosphere where agreements can be reached."\*

"Science," says an eminent British surgeon, "Science is advanced further in a shorter time by the informal chatter of a few like-minded friends over cocktails than by the formal interchange of a paper or by any number of congresses."†

The astronomers Fred Hoyle and Lyttleton discovered stimulating common interests over tea. "Of course," writes Hoyle, "scientific research is not only a matter of drinking tea. While indolence

\* *Grand Alliance*, p. 468.

† Sir Heneage Ogilvie quoted in *Time*, May 16, 1949.

## AN ESSAY ON CHIT-CHAT

is very important in itself, some hard work has to go with it. But for myself, I find it very difficult to work set hours.”†

In these instances, shoptalk is implied. President Conant has in mind something more like chit-chat when he maintains that informal conversations of graduate students in all fields create an atmosphere of understanding, and enlarge the views of the professional men of future generations.‡

More fundamental, more widespread, more enduring, than value for nations or group or profession is the value for individuals. In the unstudied and disinterested contact of minds with minds, men give voice to

. . . purposes unsure  
Thoughts hardly to be packed  
Into a narrow act  
Fancies that break through language and escape.

Thus they reveal many facets of character. What is said is largely forgotten; those who said it are remembered. In the course of many talks, they are more and more clearly *realized*, more completely and more vividly brought before the mind. So acquaintance moves toward friendship, “that last and finest achievement of human wisdom.”§

And yet, for all its values, I continue to think of chit-chat as talk for talk’s sake, justified by the pleasure that is found in it. Indeed, only where there is a pleasure can there be profit.

† *The Nature of the Universe*, p. 60.

‡ *President’s Report*, 1949–1950, p. 12.

§ As Atticus says in Max Radin’s *Epicurus My Master*, p. 89.

## *Fugue for Autumn*

MILDRED WESTON

Here where the shaken limb  
Parts with the yellow leaf  
No grief is visible.  
Resigned, and nothing loath,  
The vegetable sheaf  
Relinquishes its growth.

The stems relax their grip  
When ordered measurement  
Accounts the year fulfilled—  
When fact's inherent reason,  
Receiving full assent,  
Is heard in proper season.

Stripped to the skeleton,  
Bent by the temporal,  
This is the steadfast one  
Ungarmented and shorn:  
The spent perennial  
That takes no time to mourn.

# LITERARY LESSONS

**W**E ARE OF the firm opinion that ideas can be more powerful than things, that Western military strength and material aid, though vital, are not sufficient to stop the advance of Soviet ideas. In this connection, we believe that the United States has in its own heritage a number of concepts—known as the democratic process—which are powerful enough to meet any totalitarian challenge.

In "The Blind Alley of Totalitarianism," page 382, Harold R. Isaacs shows how the West, by confining democratic institutions to the metropolitan homelands, contributed in Asia to the growth of democracy's monster antithesis. We believe, too, that in so far as the United States is weak in the face of the enemy today, it is because we are ignoring possibilities for courageous and imaginative use of the democratic process. The Pacific Spectator therefore proposes to explore new ways in which democracy's boldest aspects can be brought to bear against all kinds of totalitarianism.

Ideas which flourish in one climate, however, often wither in another. We do not presume that even the best American ideas, untouched, can develop vigor in a foreign land. The need is for a free interchange, or, better, a fresh cross-fertilization of American ideas with other strains. We believe that this development is absolutely basic to successful American co-operation with areas such as Asia where indigenous cultures are dissimilar to our own.

As a small step toward this cross-fertilization of ideas, The Pacific Spectator announces a new department, "Literature from Asia." Our decision to approach Asian cultures through their literatures rather than through more consciously political forms of expression was deliberate. Individuals whose backgrounds and interests differ can often find common understanding in the arts, and human experience suggests that it is frequently through these media that peoples most truthfully express themselves. "Literature from Asia" will contain the best in poetry, short stories, and essays, by Asian writers.

Robert C. North



# OUT OF ASIA

*by Wallace Stegner*

TO APPROACH Asia through its literatures and its literary men must in these days seem eccentric. Asia is an enigma and a threat, a thing that howls outside our doors. It is as politics that Asia confronts us; why worry about its literatures?

But literary study is not so eccentric as it sounds at first hearing. One of the salient facts about the many Asias at this moment is our enormous and culpable ignorance of the lands, peoples, aspirations, attitudes, and ways of thinking and feeling that make up resurgent Asia. And one of the surest, though not necessarily the quickest, roads to knowledge and ultimately to understanding is through books and the people who make them.

The mere intention of literary study, however, raises absolutely sweeping questions. Is it possible in these convulsed times for an Asian to be a writer at all in the professional sense? If it is possible, what directions does his writing take? What is the effect of the political upheaval upon the arts and upon the mind of the artist? What is the development and condition of the economic side of the literary life, the magazines and newspapers and publishing houses through which a writer reaches an audience? What and how large, in the various countries of Asia, is that audience? How much influence have translations of

our own writing had upon Asian writers, and vice versa?

There are only the most rudimentary answers for any of these. It is possible in most Asian countries to be a professional writer, but just barely possible, and the professionalism is of the meagerest kind except in Japan, which is a very special case. One of the principal barriers is the illiteracy which has been the standard condition of Asia outside of Japan. In India, no more than 15 percent of the population is literate, in Thailand perhaps 50 or 60 percent, in the Philippines less than 50 percent, and so on. Much of what is called literacy, moreover, can barely sign its own name, and will not provide large numbers of book or magazine readers.

Literacy figures, furthermore, are deceptive. The United States is close to 100 percent literate, yet a recent survey by the Princeton Institute of Public Opinion indicates that barely 20 percent of Americans read any books at all. How many of Asia's literates are actually readers is a question that no one, probably, is able yet to answer. So it would be rash to say that an Indian writer has a potential audience of more than fifty million, even at 15 percent literacy. Readers are fewer and much poorer than they should be to support a class of professional writers.

In many parts of Asia, too, the

## LITERARY LESSONS OUT OF ASIA

confusion of language splits and re-splits even such limited and impoverished audiences as there are. In the Philippines the establishment of Tagalog as the national language has created in effect a bilingual nation, or rather has imposed two literary languages upon a multilingual nation. It is technically possible for Filipino readers to enjoy both English and Tagalog literature, and newspapers and magazines appear in both, but in practice the effect of bilingualism is to create two separate, devoted, partisan, and competitive audiences, and two sets of writers and media to serve them.

Thailand has only one tongue, but some of those who write in it feel disconsolately that it is a dead end, a kind of prison. The reachable audience is comparatively small and is also, they tend to feel, provincial and unsophisticated. Certainly it is still, like the Filipino audience, undifferentiated. Magazines are at much the same level; there is no critical tradition, and though it is easy to publish, it is all but impossible to find the discriminating and selective audience that would make distinctions between good writing and bad and thus put a writer on his mettle.

Indonesia reveals familiar problems: a new national language (Indonesian) which, though widely spoken and understood, has as yet few books or texts published in it; a European language (Dutch) formerly official but now discarded; and a world language (English) now officially taught as the secondary lan-

guage in the schools but not yet well established. Indonesia shows signs of approaching this problem energetically and intelligently, but the solution takes time, and here, where the very medium of expression is only half settled, literature starts from absolute scratch. The official establishment of English as the secondary language is typical of a tendency widespread in Asia. But a secondary language means little in a literary way. It is the primary or native language that is the natural vehicle of a nation's literature, and a great many of Asia's languages are in a state that might be called pre-Chaucerian, still mixing and forming and taking shape.

Most complicated of all the language tangles is that of India, where dozens of competing vernaculars, some derived from Sanskrit, some from Persian, and some from the Dravidian tongues of South India, but all to some extent mixed and many with literary traditions a thousand years old, offer a writer a paralyzing choice. At the moment, most educated Indians handle English not only with ease but often with eloquence: English is one of the literary dialects of India. But if, as is contemplated, English in future is begun only at the secondary school level, it will be only a generation before Indian English begins again to be *babu* English, and its literary significance will wane. Hindi, the official tongue, is a politician's invention; essentially it is Hindustani purged of its Urdu or Persian derivatives. It

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is very doubtful that, with all its patriotic sanctions, Hindi will replace Hindustani in the mouths of the masses who speak it. And though more people speak Hindustani as their native tongue than speak any other languages in the world except Chinese and English, millions of Indians will have to learn Hindi or Hindustani as they would learn a foreign language, and the Madrasis and other South Indians do not exactly welcome the opportunity. All the local dialects, each spoken by millions, war with Hindi and English and Urdu in a bedlam of regional squabbling. It is not yet possible to be an Indian writer; one must be a Bengali, a Punjabi, a Telegu, a Tamil, a Kannada, a Sindhi or Annamese or Oriya writer, and the difficulty is not made easier by the fact that there are a half-dozen different kinds of script. Many of the dialects, such as Gujarati and Bengali and Urdu, have richer literary traditions than the official Hindi. Dialect supporters are so zealous that the notion of the linguistic state becomes a very real issue in politics.

This literary and linguistic chaos is partly cause and partly symptom of a dangerous national disunity, and language and literature become clear expressions of the divisive forces plaguing India. Unification, whose necessity seems crystal clear to an outsider, most surely justifies the enforced imposition of one national language, even over regional protests. But neither a language nor a literature can be made overnight,

or in ten years, or in fifty; the true unity that India needs so desperately may be a century in the coming.

Some Indians, justifying their hard lot, point to Switzerland as a nation of four languages, or suggest that Europe, with all its tongues, is comparable to India with all its dialects. But Europe is hardly the inspiring model of unity that it might be, and as for multilingual Switzerland, where is Swiss literature? Swiss culture, including Swiss literature, melts away at all the edges into French, German, and Italian. Any culture is to a great extent a function of language; a nation which wants one culture must reconcile itself to a single tongue.

There are many people in India, as elsewhere in Asia, convinced that English, with its enormous head start, ought to become the world language, and that revolutionary times are the times to make that change. But in advocating the adoption of the language of the late imperial masters they run head on into the tide of cultural and political nationalism sweeping Asia, and their education, which is primarily European, has a tendency to cut them off from many of their own people. It is this European or American education superimposed upon Asian backgrounds that makes difficulty for many writers of this troubled and transitional time. They are educated, not necessarily beyond, but away



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from, the life from which they must draw their material and the people who are their natural audience.

Consider, as an extreme case, a young poet in Malaya. He was born in Java, of Chinese parents, educated in China, and finally taken to Singapore to attend Raffles University, an English institution. Though he knows Chinese and Indonesian, he writes by preference in English; what he really is, neither he nor anyone else knows. He is not a citizen of Indonesia, where he was born, nor of China, where his parents were born. He is not a citizen of Malaya, where he lives, nor can he, because of his race, become one. His passport says he is a "British-protected person." Actually he is a citizen of nowhere, the spokesman of nobody, the classic uprooted Asian intellectual, flotsam in the crack-up of empires, writing in a language not his own for an audience that he cannot conceive. The English-reading group in Singapore is the only group in the world competent to know his peculiar subject matter and his special attitudes and his rather special English, but he cannot make a reputation at home: there isn't a magazine in his city in which he can publish, except for a mimeographed sheet that he and some friends run off. He can't make a reputation abroad and let it spread back home, because he has no contacts and no rapport with that vague world audience.

Not many are so rootless as this, but many who have partially crossed the cultural gulf between East and

West have some of his uneasy sense of belonging nowhere, of having been cut off.

It is a fact that though there is an astonishing amount of literary activity all over Asia, and immense enthusiasm and much talent, literature in the midst of the Asian revolution is likely to be a temporary casualty, like habeas corpus and the other amenities. Any Asian intellectual is subject either to split loyalties or to the lure of intense partisanship, and his writing often, though certainly not inevitably, leans toward patriotic pamphleteering or retreats from the local and native to exist in some international or historical vacuum.

Political upheaval also tends to drain off many of the best minds and talents into public affairs, and social instability creates great difficulties for those who still try to make literature out of a chaotic society. Devadas Gandhi, the Mahatma's son, when it was suggested to him that the multilingual situation in India was very hard on writers and literature, replied with a shrug that literature would have to wait. Though he would probably have agreed that literature is one of the indispensables by which life is humanized, he was in accord with most other Indian leaders in concentrating on survival first. Many of Asia's best writers will inevitably be for a long time involved in public affairs as journalists, publicists, pamphleteers, not only because heart and head are committed to national liberation and rejuvenation but because these are



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the available ways of earning a livelihood with a pen.

There are also, however, the withdrawers, those who shrink back upon the Past. For these, the spectacle of politics and revolution is too disgusting, or the progress of reform too disappointingly slow, or the disjoining of the social order too terrifying. Yet they, too, mirror a side, and an important side, of the mind of Asia.

The writers of Manila, for instance, turn their backs almost to a man on the spectacle of Philippine politics; they live and write like men who walk past a dump ground with their noses clasped shut. Though modern Filipino literature begins with José Rizal's two impassioned political novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, and though Rizal is fervently admired by every Filipino, no contemporary writers seem to have followed his example. They turn instead to the villages, the folkways, the pastoral agricultural life, the sensuous slow-paced life of the provinces. Admitted that opposition, literary or otherwise, takes courage. It took courage for Rizal, too, and cost him his life; one would expect new Rizals to emerge as part of the intense political growing pains of a new nation.

Disgust with political corruption is only one reason for the swerving of literary talent away from the contemporary scene. The plain desire for a contemplative life leads many Asians, especially Indians, into a scholarly commitment to the mighty

Past, and even patriotism may take this turn, out of the desire to celebrate those things that are truly native. Whole areas of Indian publishing in the vernaculars provide little more than glosses and commentaries upon the great epics and the great religious writings. A surprisingly large proportion of Indian films—and India makes more movies than any nation except the United States—deal with mythological themes out of the Mahabharata or the Ramayana.

An additional stimulus to this impulse toward retirement and contemplation is an irritable kind of frustrated utopianism, an impatience or despair because the making of the new India is so slow and so uncertain. Two generations of resistance to Great Britain have trained Indians in opposition; they are as talented opposers as the world can produce. But now some of their genius for opposition is turned against the Congress party, justifiably or not, because in four years of existence the Congress has not performed miracles, or rid India of problems more appalling than those which face any major power.

Great expectations, great disappointments; great commitments, great refusals. If we bear in mind the inexperience with freedom, the inexperience in democracy, the inexperience even with the most rudimentary technology, and the tense

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position of being caught between the two great power blocs, we will be surprised neither that some Indians swallow the promises of communism nor that some seek peace and quiet in the nearest ashrama. The introduction of the wheelbarrow would throw millions of Indians into technological unemployment, yet side by side with this pitiful ignorance of the simplest tools lie realizable blueprints for TVA's and Hoover Dams. This is the background of aspiration, backwardness, enthusiasm, and confusion from which an Indian writer must draw his material.

Yet it is utterly false to assume, as too many Americans do, that all ignorance is Asia's and all wisdom ours. Our ignorance is in many ways the greater. In literature, for one thing, it most certainly is.

Though American literature is by no means as well known as it might be, it is better known among the educated of every country in Asia than the literature of that country is known in America. Japanese literature, as an example, has been translated and introduced into this country only in the merest fragments: yet the Japanese read us by wholesale. Through the translation program of SCAP alone, more than three hundred American books have been translated and published in Japan since the end of the war, and many more have been directly negotiated outside of SCAP. The SCAP libraries throughout Japan make American books and magazines available, introducing something like the

American public library system into Japan, and there have been large gifts of books to various Japanese libraries and universities.

Japan is a nation of readers; it has the most prolific publishing business in the world, which annually publishes twice as much as American publishers produce. It has many magazines, at every level, and its newspapers have the healthy habit of serializing not trash but the novels of some of the best-known Japanese writers. But even in Japan, the exception in Asia, knowledge of American literature, and of American life and ideals as mirrored in that literature, is imperfect. Consider, then, how very much greater is our ignorance of things Japanese—or of things Indian, Filipino, Indonesian. Here is Indonesia, the sixth largest nation in the world in population, the third richest in natural resources, a nation barely a year old, no more than a name to most Americans, but a great potential force in the world's history and a great potential influence on the world's thought. We know next to nothing about it; it is time we did.

An Indonesian, an Indian, a Thai, a Japanese, can get some marvelously distorted pictures of America from the magazines he reads and the movies he sees. No American has fully realized the horror, the noise, the violence, the vulgarity, the distortion of reality, in most American movies until he has seen one of them in a Bengali village. Then he looks with the eyes of the silent man in a

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dhobi who sits next to him, and he crawls with embarrassment because he sees an image of his country forming in the Indian's mind—an image that is completely false because there is no corrective, no context. To this Indian, America equals chases across the rooftops through the technological jungle, equals hard-faced men talking out of the corners of their mouths, equals the cocktail shaker and the conspicuous waste. His misconception of us is surpassed only by our misconception of him. What is needed for both of us is a greatly increased flow of information and a deepened and widened acquaintance with the attitudes of mind native to each of us. We on our part need to know infinitely more than we do about the characteristic art forms of the Asian nations whose coming to power suddenly confronts us and whose weight will increasingly be felt in the world. For behind the art forms, strange though they may be at first, are people, minds, complexes of feeling and memory and aspiration, such complexes as we are ourselves. If we search the stranger carefully enough, we are almost certain to find a brother.

It is with that hope and expectation that *The Pacific Spectator* will from this issue on do what it can to present for a discriminating American audience carefully selected samples of various Asian literatures, together with discussions of those literatures not by American scholars but by Asians, equipped to speak from within. Though the typical Asian writer these days is like a man trying to make a speech while other people turn cobras loose at the back of the hall, he is one of the best representatives of the educated and articulate and changing Asia which we must understand. In helping to promote even in a small way the flow of honest writing back and forth between America and the many emerging Asias, the editors are moved by the conviction that it is co-operation rather than gifts, acceptance and understanding rather than condescension, that are needed to restore confidence between this country and the countries of Asia and clear the way for future peace. In these ways respect can be built in common.



# LETTER FROM TOKYO

DEAR DR. STEGNER: I hope that this letter will find you and your family in the best of health. I suppose that you must be quite tired after visiting so many places in such a comparatively short time. However, I expect that you were able to gain numerous, unique experiences through your travels, and I hope, most sincerely, that your stay in Japan may have proved as fruitful as in the other countries.

I, myself, am extremely grateful for having had the opportunity of interpreting for you, and thus meeting you. To tell the truth, I was able to gain far more than I anticipated, through the experience. It was a pity that I was unable to attend the second, third, and fourth of your lectures, because of suffering from an attack of asthma. I feel sorry that my coughing may have injured the over-all effect of the lectures I interpreted. Yet, for my own part, I believe that I was especially lucky in being able to handle the lecture on literary journalism and the one on the international nature of literature. They are both subjects for which I have a special interest, and your lectures were very enlightening indeed.

I have always felt that the Japanese writers should show more activity in getting their works introduced to the outside world. They seem to have a mistaken conception of that which constitutes a proper literary attitude.

It seems as if they believe that so long as their works are highly recognized in the light of Japanese literary evaluation, there is no further need to present them before the eyes of the world-wide literary circles. In some cases, it seems as if the Japanese writers have an idea that it is quite impossible for peoples other than the Japanese to recognize the beauty, delicacy, and value of Japanese literature. They feel that the thoughts and expressions which are contained in their literary works are so peculiar to this country that no foreign national can appreciate their value. It may be true that the thoughts and expressions are peculiar, but I do not believe that this can be any justification for the past lack of positive action in the matter of the internationalization of Japanese literature. The Japanese literary circles have been extremely energetic in absorbing the literary products of foreign countries, but they have been content to wait for the other countries to take the initiative in the matter of translating their own works. Of course, I believe that it is more usual for the translation to be done by a national of the language into which the original is to be translated; but in the case of the Japanese language, it should be the Japanese scholars of English who should take the initial steps in presenting the literary output of this country to the



by Hiroo Mukai

Americans and the British. This is due to the extremely complicated nature of the Japanese language; its characters, structure, and vocabulary.

Narrow-mindedness, self-satisfaction, smallness of scale, and lack of perspective may be pointed out as being the unfortunate characteristics of Japanese fiction. Such characteristics may be attributed to the above-mentioned isolated nature of the Japanese literary world. The so-called "Watakushi Shosetsu" (I-Short Story or Novel) and "Fuzoku Shosetsu" (Custom Short Story or Novel) are typical products of Japan's literary climate. The former is a monologue-form account of the daily events and thoughts of the author, although such events and thoughts are at times attributed to a third person. The extreme absence of plot is its most significant property, and it is frequently quite impossible to find anything in its contents to separate it from a diary or casual impressions. The latter is a pure portrayal of the customs and manners of the times, without allowing the entrance of any criticism or evaluation, and with neither motive nor purpose. In a way, it is somewhat similar to the fiction of the realistic school, but is much more superficial. In some cases, it may be said to be a story with neither beginning nor end; it may be just a record of how a young

woman goes shopping on the Ginza, meets a young man, drinks tea with him, pays the bill for three hundred yen, gives ten yen to a beggar on her way home, and returns to her home; and yet this record is by no means a record of the psychological actions and reactions of the young woman.

I believe that it is true that some of the Japanese classics have value in their beauty of expression and content, and that they are worthy of honorable mention in the cultural and literary history of the world. However, in modern Japanese literature, which is usually considered to start from Shimei Futabatei's *Ukigumo* ("Floating Cloud"), which was made public in 1887, I am afraid that none are gifted with that rare and subtle property which justifies their entry into the ranks of the great works. Writers such as Koyo Ozaki, Shoyo Tsubouchi, Ogai Mori, Soseki Natsume, Toson Shimazaki, Ryunosuke Akutagawa, Kan Kikuchi have contributed in many ways to the development of the Japanese short story and novel, and the greater part of their works are up to, or above, the standard of good literature; but the best of their works merit but an evaluation as near-greats. Modern Japanese literature has yet to produce the short story or novel worthy of enshrinement on the altar of immortality. Of course, it would be expecting too much to hope for a number

## LETTER FROM TOKYO

of great works within a period of less than a hundred years. But I believe that if this country's literary output had, in the past, been exposed to more criticism and evaluation of an international nature, we would now be the proud possessors of literary treasures of a much higher quality than is now the case.

It is true that there are other factors to be considered with regard to the quality of modern Japanese literature. The greatest of these may be the confusion, the instability, and the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary atmosphere which prevailed over the greater part of the period. Broadly speaking, the situation in Japan after the Meiji Restoration was one where elements of manifold and diverse natures combined, conflicted, or repulsed each other. The old and the new; the East and the West; the orthodox and the unorthodox; the radical and the moderate; the conservative, the liberal, the progressive, and the reformist; the Japanese, the Chinese, the Russian, the British, the French, the American, the German, the Dutch, and the Spanish; all these elements and many others were to be found in the political, economic, social, religious, and cultural conditions of the period following the Meiji Restoration. This situation continued from the first years of Meiji, through the Taisho era (1912-26) and the pre- and postwar periods of the Showa era (1926 to the present day), although there were many changes,

both in content and degree. It may be said that the complexity of the situation in Japan today parallels that of the early Meiji regime, in many ways.

All this confusion, which existed and continues to exist in modern Japan, resulted in a complete absence of any political, economical, social, religious, or cultural system which could be correctly called an essentially and individually Japanese one. Many systems did and do exist; but they all have a common attribute in the fact that they are mixtures of native and foreign elements, which have yet to be fully digested and united before they can be recognized as being truly Japanese. The system, which, while being quite different from that of the pre-Meiji ages, is yet undeniably Japanese in the fact that it is no longer a mere borrowing of a foreign system, nor an awkward blend of numerous systems, is still in the process of formation. And I believe that the completion of such a system in the cultural field will serve as the foundation on which truly great works of literature may be produced. In a way, this may seem contradictory to my previous assertion that a more international exposure is needed in order to give birth to Japanese literature of a greater value. However, I believe that the great works will appear only after the Japanese writers reach the stage where they no longer produce works which are but superficial imitations of Chekhov, Tolstoy, Dostoev-

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sky, Proust, Gide, Joyce, Poe, and which have been cultivated under the rays of the literary criticism of their fellow countrymen only, but where their works are incarnations of the best teachings of the native and foreign masters, and are thoroughly enriched by the nourishment of world-wide criticism.

I just mentioned "superficial imitation," but a typical example of this trend in Japanese literature is to be found in the realist movement in this country. The first novel of this school is said to be Toson Shimazaki's *Hakai* ("Apostasy"), which appeared in 1906; but the main proponent of this movement was Katai Tayama, who wrote several short stories depicting the darker and uglier aspects of human nature. However, this movement in its Japanese form was merely an attempt to portray realistically the weaknesses, the imperfections, the sordidness, the greediness, and the lustfulness of the human being, and there was a substantial lack of a realization of the social elements which motivated the original movement in France. Thus, in some cases, there was a tendency to revel in obscene and sensual descriptions of life, under the illusion that such was actually the essence of realism. The same may be said of the Japanese existentialist school, which has gained much popularity in this country. The philosophical concepts which form the basis of this movement seem to be disregarded by most of its Japanese followers. Their

masterpieces of existentialist literature are but exposures of the physical instincts, manifestations of decadent nihilism, or lurid pictures of the disagreeable. I am sure that if such works were to be set before the American, the British, or the French critics, it would immediately be enforced upon the writers that their existentialist masterpieces have value less than the paper on which they are printed. Yet if a Japanese critic were to say the same, he would be ignored or become the center of an endless controversy. Such is the Japanese mind toward European or American culture.

I believe that you must already be aware of the fact that the Naoki Award, which is the award given for the best work in the field of popular literature, has been given to Kazuo Dan. The situation is quite similar to that of last year, when it was presented to Miss Itoko Koyama, the lady who made the address of gratitude on the final day of your lectures. Dan is an adherent of Haruo Sato, whom I believe you met while in Japan, and is quite highly thought of among the middle-aged writers. So he is primarily considered to be a writer of good literature, rather than popular literature. However, there is a difference in Dan's case, when compared with that of Miss Koyama, in the fact that the works for which the award was given were intentionally



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written as popular fiction. This may be said to be a characteristic of the postwar literary world in Japan. For in the past, the writers who considered themselves to be of the literary class were unwilling to write popular fiction. There was a tendency to assert that their literary gems were not for the public to enjoy; that the literary elite were the only persons qualified to share the riches of their products; and that popularity was a stigma rather than an honor. Today, however, even the literary writers are actively producing works which are of interest to persons without literary taste. The works are easier to understand and have more elements of interest than the so-called *pure literature*, but are of a higher literary level than the normal popular fiction. Because of this, they have come to be classified as "intermediate fiction," and magazines such as the *Shosetsu Shincho*, the *Shosetsu Koen*, the *Bessatsu Bungei Shunju*, are the main organs for publishing this type of story. I believe that this tendency on the part of the Japanese literary writers to descend from their self-erected pulpit and mingle with the literary commoners may be acknowledged as a welcome sign of a new awakening. For if this could serve as the stimulant for the writer's realization of the necessity of interest as an element of good literature, it would certainly be an effective step in broadening the basis of Japanese literature. However, I am somewhat afraid that the present tendency will

have a negative influence upon the future of our literature, because the main reason for the liveliness in the field of intermediate fiction seems to be the economic needs of the writers. In other words, they are actively writing such stories in order to secure a substantial income, and hence their works are apt to be unnecessarily coarse and hasty. The works which they are publishing in the quality magazines are below their former standards, and more on a level with their contributions to the lower-grade magazines. The over-all result of the literary writers' descent from the artistic literature is, therefore, a literary output poorer in quality, inferior in technique, rich in commercialism, easier to understand and easier to forget, and in summary, of a mediocre nature. However, I feel that this may be an unavoidable transitional period in the evolution of a better quality of literature.

I am afraid that I must have bored you with such a lengthy letter. I hoped to be able to furnish you with information of a more interesting nature, but I am still confined to my home on account of my asthma and have not been able to carry on any research in my studies of contemporary Japanese literature. However, I have been able to communicate with Miss Itoko Koyama and am glad to tell you that she is very willing to have me translate her prize-winning story, "Sentence Suspended." I hope to be able to complete it before leaving for the United States.



HIROO MUKAI

I would greatly appreciate it if you could give me some information as to the titles and publishers of reference books on the writing of short stories and novels. I cannot over-emphasize the inspirational fruits of your lectures, and the encouragement you afforded me through your depiction of the international nature of literature. My sole desire is that I may be able to accomplish something in bringing the literary

output of this country to the attention of the English-speaking peoples.

Hoping that this will be the beginning of a long and mutually beneficial correspondence and acquaintanceship, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

TOKYO, JAPAN  
March 14, 1951

HIROO MUKAI

*"... I want you to look for men who are honest and willing to help me in the constructive work . . . after the fighting is finished, i.e., when the revolution is successful. The fighting part of the revolution is an easy matter; the constructive part is a real difficulty."*

—SUN YAT-SEN writing to a friend in the United States, August 14, 1914. Quoted from *Ten Letters of Sun Yat-sen*, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford University

# INSECTS OF VARIOUS KINDS

IT WAS a day in late autumn, a sunny afternoon. It happened that not long after the radio started playing some foreign music, a spider came out of a corner of the room and began to make queer motions on the wall.

It seems likely that my sickness, which is now in its fourth year, is gaining upon me; for the yearly comparisons of my health, spring with spring, autumn with autumn, are by no means encouraging. It may be that I am sinking gradually and imperceptibly. But however that may be, nowadays I pass the greater part of each day reclining, with much time spent in staring at the rain-spotted ceiling of my featureless eight-mat room.

Because it is already cold, there are no bugs; but the flies are clinging to the red-cedar ceiling boards, and while the sun is shining, they come down to the open corridor and the matting and move hither and thither. They even alight upon my face and are a nuisance.

The spiders are what I see on the ceiling and the walls in addition to the flies. They are large spiders, gray in color and covered with light speckles. It seems that probably two or three of these spiders are hiding somewhere in this eight-mat room. The two or three have never all come out at once, but to my accustomed eyes the difference is obvious and I

know immediately, "Oh, this is that fellow."

The fellow that made queer motions on the wall was the one which seemed to be perhaps the smallest among them. The music was a recording of "Zigeunerweisen." It must have been the red-labeled, twelve-inch, Victor disc by Jascha Heifetz which I, too, used to possess. Because I recognized it as soon as it started playing, I cut short my meditations on some matter, and instinctively prepared my ears to receive that gorgeous melody.

By and by, something came slidingly into the line of my vision as I stared vacantly. It was a spider, and no sooner had it glided about a foot from the corner of the wall than it halted for a moment. As I watched without actually realizing that I was watching, the fellow began to walk around on the wall in a mildly animated fashion, moving his long legs slowly one by one. The spider's dance—I thought for a moment; but it was not a movement vivid enough to be called a dance. It was not as if he were doing this or that to the music of the tune, but he, well somehow, walked around the spot inordinately and with a spasmodic gait as if he were excited.

—He's being carried away by the music, thought I, feeling amused and astonished. I also felt some strangeness. I had heard that on oc-

by Kazuo Ozaki  
translated by Hiroo Mukai

casion cattle and dogs were stimulated by music—the music of human beings; and especially, in the dogs' case, I myself have actually witnessed it. Nevertheless, when it came to the spider, I could not for the moment accept it as it was, and I did not take my suspicious eyes off him. What would he do when the tune ended? Intending not to miss seeing that, I continued to watch him carefully.

The tune ended. Thereupon the spider came to a halt with an air of unexpectedness. Then promptly, with his usual nimble motion noiseless and sliding, he disappeared into the original corner of the wall. It somehow appeared as if he had found himself caught out, as if he were a little bit abashed and beating a hasty retreat.—This peremptory statement is inappropriate, but certainly the impression I received was of this kind.

I do not know whether the spider species has or has not got a sense of hearing. I have read Fabre's *Souvenirs Entomologiques*, but I do not even remember if there was or was not an answer to a question like this, whether it is or is not true that the spider is equipped with another kind of sensibility to sound, which is different to our sense of hearing. When all is said, I know nothing about it. But not having the ground to dismiss this possibility, I received a slightly

odd impression at the time. Now I must keep my weather eye open, was somewhat the way I put it to myself.

In connection with this incident, I recall that I have twice accidentally cooped up a spider for a certain length of time.

Usually I have slightly more energy in the hot weather. One day during the summer, I happened to need an empty bottle for something, and when I took out one which seemed suitable and inadvertently removed the stopper, a spider ran out and disappeared into the shadows. While it was only about an inch or an inch and a half from foot to foot, and so smallish that it could not bear comparison with the fellow on the wall of the eight-mat room, its color was a flesh tint and its body slender.

A little surprised because the spider had come out of the bottle, I retraced my memory. These empty bottles I had told my children to wash clean in early spring; and having placed them upside down for a day to get rid of the moisture inside, I had stoppered them to prevent the dust and grime getting in, and had put them together in an empty box. It must have been during that single day that the spider had got into the bottle.

When the spider found his exit closed, he probably made nothing of it at first. Presently, after a few days

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passed and he, feeling hungry, took it into his head to search for food, he must have realized in what a situation he was now ensnared. His every effort showed that escape was impossible. In time, he stopped struggling. He just quietly waited for the chance to come. And thus half a year—When I removed the stopper, the spider escaped with a nimbleness possessed only by those persons awaiting the signal gun on the starting line.

Then another time.

The south side of the eight-mat room is an open corridor, and the toilet is at the west end of this corridor. The window of the men's lavatory faces the west; it is possible to see Mount Fuji looming largely before one through the plum trees. One morning, I discovered a spider cooped up between the window's two sliding glass panes. I or somebody else must have opened the window during the night. The spider, which had been clinging to one of the glass panes, had been cooped up through the two sliding panes overlapping. It was of the same kind as the fellow in the eight-mat room and about three inches from foot to foot. Although there was room enough between each of the two panes to prevent pressing his body, the overlapping frames did not have the space to permit his escape.

I immediately recalled the former occasion of the empty bottle. This time I would watch his fate with my own eyes; such an idea came to my mind. I told the members of my

family not to shut the window. The spider in the empty bottle had lived for about half a year without eating, and on the scanty ventilation from the very trifling openings in the coarse wooden stopper. The spider this time was plump like a dumpling, and a much bigger fellow. A waiting game against this fellow will take time, thought I.

The Fuji I look at each time I attend to my needs dresses itself variously, in accordance with the weather and the time. Its features in the daytime on a fine day are commonplace. Fuji dimly and soundlessly glimmering beneath the bright and clear moonlight, in the deep of the night; Fuji at dawn, luminous with a rose tint toward the summit and a dark purple on its flanks, and with the sky its background still reflecting the afterglow of the stars—The spider remains motionless with an appearance of planting his feet slantingly upon the shoulder of Mount Fuji in such scenes. He always remained motionless. From the time I discovered him cooped up, I never once saw him struggling. When I flip the glass with my finger tips, saying "Hey!" he stirs slightly with an air of reluctance. That is all.

About a month passed, and I noticed that his body had grown a little thinner.

"I say! The spider in the toilet has grown thinner."

"Yes, so it seems. Poor creature."

"How many days is a spider's fasting period, I wonder?"

"Well, I don't know."



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My wife does not seem to be interested. She seems to think that imprisoning him is a foolish whim and indeed a nuisance to the spider.

"Anyway," said I with some feeling of opposition to this attitude of my wife's, "don't let it get away."

Yet another half-month passed. The spider was growing thinner obviously. And the gray tint of his body seemed to have faded a little with time.

One day, when close to two months had elapsed, and a few days after I had seen the other spider promenading on the wall, my wife cried "Oh!" in the direction of the toilet, and immediately afterward I heard her voice saying, "It's got away!" As usual, I was reclining and wool-gathering, and though I realized that the spider had got away, I kept silent, feeling that what had happened was all right with me.

—Usually, when cleaning the toilet, she was on her guard against the spider's escape, and moved both windowpanes together just as they overlapped. But today, she had inadvertently put her hand to only one of them, and though she realized it when she had drawn it halfway, it was then already too late. She was astonished by the spider's quickness of flight; it was just as if he had been waiting eagerly—I listened to my wife's apologetic explanation without paying much heed to it, and muttered words like, "That fellow's got a charmed life." To tell the truth, I had grown tired of the endurance contest against the spider. At any

rate it was settled, and rather in the better way. That is what I thought.

That fellow "Death," who has continued a three-legged race as my partner ever since I was born into this world; Death, who has silently walked along in my company for forty-eight years without being asked to do so; lately his features weigh heavily on my mind. Really, he somehow has got a confoundedly arrogant look.

I must have been about twenty when I first realized keenly that I had from the beginning been a fellow traveler to such an outrageous fellow. In other words, I then began to be conscious of life. Nevertheless, my awakening must certainly have been later than that of the average person. I had been free from care.

For about a year, from my twenty-third to -fourth year, I was stricken by a serious sickness, and dangerously near surrendering to the fellow; but I managed to struggle through. Since then, I had thought he was easy to tackle, but I thought so in secret. If I were openly to express it in my looks, he would be bound to get angry. If I made him angry, I would suffer. These were my feelings. It would be troublesome if he should suddenly quicken his pace.

I will cut this short, but in brief, I must inevitably accompany the fellow to the place he goes to. It is the same whether I put up a struggle or

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not—this fact is clear. What remains is the question of time. I wonder if there can be anything so poignant and sad as man's efforts in trying to escape from time and space; his efforts in trying to catch hold of a deity or the absolute or a straw as soon as he can lay his hands upon it? You may express it in any way: a fleeting instant ten thousand years; all in one. Nevertheless, it will be no more than a sanctuary of the ideal. Why not give up? Is it forbidden to give up? But what an imposing spectacle this is! This air castle which man, unable to give up, has built with his successive dreams. And further, how great are its delicacy and exquisiteness! —While I watch the spiders and the flies which appear and disappear on the ceiling, I drowsily think of such matters, because there is no alternative.

This is about insects again, but I have once read somewhere about the acrobatic flea show and its ringmaster's method of training the fleas. He catches a flea and puts him into a small, round glass ball. The flea jumps about. But his surroundings are an impregnable wall. After jumping over and over again, it occurs to him that to jump may have been a mistake. He tries jumping once more. It is no use. He gives up and becomes quiet. Then the man who is the trainer frightens him from outside. Instinctively, he jumps. It is no use; he cannot get away. The man frightens him again; he jumps; eventually the flea realizes that it is

useless. It is said that through this repetition, the flea reaches a stage where he will not jump no matter what may happen. Then, for the first time, he is made to learn tricks and appear on the stage.

I remember this because I thought it was very cruel to change at one's convenience something with which Nature has endowed another.

"Really, it's an inhuman story," I said to a young friend who had come from Tokyo to relax while inquiring after my condition. "Imagine the flea's feeling of despair when he says, 'Is it no good, whatever I do? I understand' —Conceivable or not, he is entitled to some sympathy anyway. Yet somehow, he seems to be essentially a fool who hides his head but not his rear. Nevertheless, how about his trying to jump once more? Just once will be enough."

"I suppose it must already be the very limit for the flea," my friend said laughingly. "For the flea's part, he must already have tried his final one-more jump."

"I wonder if that's so?" I grimaced to show how sorry I felt. "It's mortifying."

My friend laughed. "A story exactly the opposite to that one appeared in something recently," he started to tell me. "What's-its-name bee, it's a bee called something, is said to have wings which in comparison with his body don't have the strength to fly. In short, they say that, considering the area of his wings, and the number of vibrations as the wings beat the air, and various

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other data, his flying is dynamically impossible. Yet actually the bee is flying unconcernedly. The long and the short of it is that he can fly because he does not know that he cannot fly. That's the story."

"I see. Yes, such a thing seems probable— Well that's fine."

The idea of something's being possible because the impossibility of it had not been realized was in itself sufficiently diverting, and I had been able to recover somewhat from the melancholy brought on by the story of the flea.

I have heard that too much massaging is bad for the pains of neuralgia and rheumatism. But I often have my wife or eldest daughter massage me; for when the pain is not very intense, it is frequently cured by merely having a massage. If the pain is allowed to grow severe, however, a massage is no longer any good. Because the pain increases if touched, there is truly no way for the people near me to treat me. When my neuralgia is not troubling me and I am only suffering from a stiffness in the shoulders, it is one of the luxuries that I can now enjoy to get some member of my busy family to massage me. Nowadays, since my sixteen-year-old, eldest daughter has grown similar in height to her mother, wears the same size *tabi*, and has become stronger than before, I mostly get her to massage me. Since her finger tips are more supple than my wife's, which have become coarse with the rough work in the country

after evacuating from Tokyo, they seem to be more effective. Moreover, because my eldest daughter does her homework and the like, using my body in place of a desk to support her opened book, while massaging my right shoulder as I lie on my left side, it is not a total loss of time either.

We also talk sometimes. About school, about teachers, about friends—; in most cases the topics are commonplace, and I only need to listen to her and grunt assent. But at times she asks questions. Only the other day, she suddenly asked me whether the universe is finite or infinite. The topic had no connection with our conversation, and I felt as if I had been lightly shaken awake as I drowsed.

"Well, that's not known, I believe."

"Don't even the scholars know?"

"No. There isn't any established theory, I think. —That's something that I myself would like to know, even more than you do." While I was speaking, I was recalling to my mind a certain article that I had recently read. The number of spiral nebulae in the visible universe is estimated to be about one hundred million, and they are scattered about at an average distance of two million light-years; the distance from the earth to the farthest nebula now visible, to the one that is on the border of the universe so to speak, is about two hun-



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dred and fifty million light-years, and the diameter of each nebula is twenty thousand light-years—I think something like this was written in the article. I, too, have had an experience of falling into a kind of sentimentality because of the *bigness of the universe*, thought I. I think that it happened when I was a senior student at middle school. When I realized that my sixteen-year-old biggest daughter was now in the same stage, I was carried away by a desire to take good care of her. “Do you know about a light-year?” I ask.

“Yes sir,” she says, deliberately speaking in the manner of answering a question in the classroom. “It is the distance that light travels during one year.”

“Right.” I too assume a teacher’s tone. “Then how many kilometers is it?”

“Well . . .”

“Stop massaging for a moment. Get a pencil and paper. Figure it out, please.”

“Er, the speed of light per second is . . .” So saying, my eldest daughter calculated multiplication upon multiplication, and arriving at a sum of thirteen or fourteen figures, exclaimed that the zeros were running over out of the paper. When I asked her to multiply that by two hundred and fifty million, she said that such an astronomical figure was a bother.

“But this is astronomy.”

“Oh, yes!” my daughter said. “Somehow, it stuns me and makes me sad.” She dropped her pencil.

We were both silent for a while.

But presently, “Still, I think there’s no need to be surprised at the largeness of a figure,” I begin to say. “Figures are man’s invention, so they can be changed at will by the way you determine the unit. For instance, you take one hundred million light-years as a unit, and call it an ultra light-year. Then the radius of the visible universe will be two and a half or three ultra light-years; two point five or three. Why, is that all, one will come to feel. —On the contrary, if you use an atomical unit, the number of zeros will be so many that not only will they run over and out of the paper, but you won’t be able to write them all down even if you spend your whole life at it.”

“Yes,” she quietly replies.

“It comes to a matter of where you set the unit, doesn’t it? If the universe is finite, it can be grasped by man’s mind, no matter how many the zeros may be. But if it should be infinite . . .”

Because the word god came to my mind then, I suddenly shut my mouth. My daughter was massaging my right shoulder mechanically. With a feeling that the subject had been transferred to myself, I continued to mutter and murmur within my mind.

—Actually, what is our standing in the universe? On what part of time and space do we in fact hang? Are we able, or unable, to find this out for ourselves? If we do find out, will we cease to be as we are?

I reflect upon the cases of the spider and the flea and the what’s-



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its-name bee. The spiders which I had imprisoned were able to escape by accident on both occasions, the spiders that had continued waiting in utter stillness for a chance which they did not even know would come. While I felt a tinge of antipathy toward them, I was impressed by their nimbleness in not missing their chances.

The flea is a fool, a dolt. What's-its-name bee is a daredevil with the daring of blindness. The flea that relinquishes the possible of its own accord and has no doubts, although the impregnable wall has already been removed; the bee that makes the impossible possible by believing; which of the two are we? Not necessarily we; what about me, my own self?

For my part, I cannot act like the spider in a cool-headed and indomitable manner. I would like to, but I have a feeling that such action is un congenial to my nature.

I cannot possibly match the what's-its-name bee's devil-may-care confidence. Still, I wonder if this is confidence? If his actions are unconscious, this should mean that there is no confidence or anything there. It is merely natural for the bee, and there is nothing for him to be commended upon.

I may have some resemblance to the foolish and doltish flea.

I wonder if there is any freedom? Is everything scheduled? Is my freedom in accordance with somebody's program? Again, is everything accidental? Is there an im-

pregnable wall or not? I do not know. What I do know is that someday, sooner or later, the three-legged race with Death will end.

What if there were some fellow watching my every action from some place, as I observe the spider and the flea and the bee? Furthermore, what if there were some fellow prescribing and limiting all my thought movements in the way I imprisoned the spider and then let it escape? What if it were that I, like the flea, am being taught a cruel lesson by somebody? Would there be no case of the bee which is myself being told by someone, "Actually, you cannot fly"? Does such a fellow exist from the beginning, or do we create him, or else, do we become so?—There is no one to teach me this.

The flies are a nuisance. Because it is already winter, they appear only in the noontide; but they even use my face for a playground as I lie buried up to my chin in the bed-clothes.

I made a great discovery with regard to the fly. When he alights on my cheek, I chase him away by moving the muscles of my cheek or shaking my head. Flying away, he immediately comes back to the same place. I chase him away again. He flies away, and again alights. When this is repeated three times, he gives up and no longer comes to the same spot. This is the same wherever the

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place may be. It seems to be the habit of all flies to change their minds completely after being chased away three times.

"It's interesting; try and see," I tell the members of my family. But while saying, "Is that so? How interesting," they are insincere, and nobody tries to carry out such an experiment. They are silently answering that they are busy. Of course, I do not force them to try. All the same, I voicelessly mutter to myself, "What is meant by being busy? Is being busy so important?"

Then again, I once managed successfully to do an extremely unusual thing. I caught a fly with my forehead.

A fly settled upon my forehead, and I suddenly raised my eyebrows without actually having a clear intention to chase it away. A commotion immediately arose on my forehead. The deep lines which crossed my forehead had tightly trapped the fly's legs. The fly was anchored to my brow by his legs, though I knew not how many legs, and was whirring its wings uselessly but noisily. The state of his confusion could be clearly imagined.

"Hey!" I shouted loudly, still wearing a droll expression with my eyebrows raised high and my forehead creased. "Come here, somebody!" My eldest son, who is in the first year of middle school, came with a look of what's-the-matter on his face.

"There's a fly on my forehead, isn't there? Get it."

"But I can't. You don't want me to hit it with the fly swatter, do you?"

"You can get it with your hands immediately; for it can't get away."

The finger tips of my dubious son caught the fly without difficulty.

"What about it? Smart, don't you think? Catching a fly by one's forehead; this may be an epoch-making event that nobody can do."

"Gosh, what a surprise," said my eldest son, and creasing his own forehead, he was stroking it with one hand.

"You can't do it." Grinning, I watched him as he grasped the fly carefully in one hand and stroked his forehead with the other. He is thirteen, large-built, and the picture of good health. Hardly any lines crease his forehead. The lines on my forehead are already deep. And the lines are not only on my forehead.

"What? What's happened?"

All the members of my household came from the next room, and on hearing my son's report, started laughing simultaneously.

"Oh, how funny!" Even my seven-year-old, second daughter was laughing saucily. I watched them as they all stroked their foreheads as if in unison. Then I told them, "That's enough. Now go away."

I was beginning to feel a bit moody.

# THE POWER OF FREEDOM\*

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*by Henry Allen Moe*

**M**Y THEME is the only proper theme for me in this place: for me there could be no other. It is that man's temple of achievement has been built by individual men—men of eager questing minds and devoted spirits—thinking and visualizing and feeling through all the ages. Most of them were journeymen—good craftsmen entitled to our honor—but here and there stands out one who exemplifies, in Bertrand Russell's words, "all the noon-day brightness of human genius."

The gods in my pantheon are these individual men, the geniuses and the journeymen both. They have made us all that we amount to. In a world that exalts organization, my purpose here today is, very simply, to insist that, for you and me and for things of the mind and spirit that principally concern you and me, individuals, individual persons only, are all that matter in our search to control our fates.

This is what I shall talk about. If I seem to claim too much in the preceding sentence, I ask you to remember that one of the difficulties about saying anything is that it cannot be said all at once. The corollaries will appear later; but, at the end, the sentence will stand. It will stand in the clear sense of Albert Einstein's statement to Abraham Flexner, "I am a horse of single harness." The Field House at Stagg Field, Oak Ridge, and Alamogordo are the evident corollaries here; and what I am saying is that without the horse of single harness, the lonely seeker Albert Einstein, these organizations would never have been, nor had any reason to be.

As I go on I want you to know that I am saying what I have said before, in the reports of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. I tell you this because I want you to realize that I wrote these things under the conditions that Mr. Justice Holmes laid down

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for statements that truly had meaning—"out of experience, under the burden of responsibility." These, then, are not a theorist's but an operator's words: at least one foundation has been managed on these principles, with what success some of you may judge better than I.

"The progress of society," wrote Sir Henry Maine in one of the most brilliant of legal generalizations, "is from status to contract." The essence of contract is that one makes a choice of what one will or will not do. The greater the range of choice, the greater the rate of change: for change is dependent upon the possibilities that individual men see for the future. It is so in all researches: it is so in all human affairs.

Thus, all knowledge and all understanding in the present depends on what individual men have had a chance to think and do in the past; for knowledge and understanding are the results of the intellectual processes only of individuals. Whatever the results—good or evil—they all start with an individual.

To Becquerel's discovery of radioactivity in 1896 and Einstein's theory of the equivalence of matter and energy announced in 1905 were added the contributions of other individual scientists and engineers to make an atomic bomb in 1945. The progression up to that result can be followed—except for the partial blank of wartime secrecy—name by name and step by step. It is known who did what, when he did it, and the material conditions under which he was able to do it.

Doubtless all developments of the human mind and spirit, had they enjoyed in the past the precise reportage of modern science, similarly could be tagged with the names of individual persons. Including developments in the arts, it ought to be affirmed; for there is no distinction of kind or quality between so-called scholarship and so-called creative work in their highest exercise; and the reason is, of course, and very simply, that both in their highest exercise are creative performances. John Livingston Lowes has explained it in *The Road to Xanadu*: ". . . the imagination voyaging through chaos and reducing it to clarity and order is the symbol of all the quests which lend glory to our dust."



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*All the quests*, be it noted; and be it noted also that the imagination voyaging through chaos and reducing it to clarity and order is what makes all scholarship and all art worthy of their proper pride.

To develop and bring to their highest possible exercise the capacities of individual persons to make that voyage is, quite obviously, the world's most needed result. Only thus shall we add that knowledge and understanding which is our best hope for survival and progress. All universities and all foundations should know that they miss all their best opportunities if they fail to recognize that this should be their one goal, and that it is the *only goal* within their reach.

In this day of close intellectual reporting we are likely to know by whom, when, where, and under what material conditions a thing of the mind was done; but what we do not know is in what concatenation of circumstances internal to the individual the thing was done. What made Leonardo see Christ as he painted Him in "The Last Supper"? How was it that Copernicus was able to take the intellectual step that freed men's minds from the shackles of the theory of a fixed earth?

The only possible answer is that we do not know any answers to these questions. What can be said with confidence is that they did what they did to affect the lives of all subsequent civilized men because they were somehow enabled to do the work *they* wanted to do.

This simple conclusion points the course for all foundations and all universities: they should have it as their purpose to make opportunities for the ablest persons they can find to do what they want to do. Administrators should not interpose ideas of what should be done: for, while the next step in a succession of steps may sometimes be predicted, the truly pathbreaking step never can be predicted by others and seldom even by the man who will take it.

For any foundation, any university, which hopes to contribute to the survival or progress of mankind by assisting men and women to do their work of research and artistic creation, it follows that the only possible kind of aegis that should be provided is that which gives the utmost in freedom to those who are contributing to the ad-

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vancement of knowledge and understanding. No other course will result in, can result in, work of the highest order; and, while, even under such free aegis, obviously most of the work produced will not be of such order, still without it none of such order can be produced.

It is impossible for me to understand those who say that they are interested in work in this field and in that field and in no others; for saying that is saying that they think they know where the next best developments are to come—and that is beyond any human knowing. Although it may be agreed that the next best step for mankind is *not* needed to be taken in atomic physics but in the understanding of man's relationship to man, it cannot be known from what place the next best step—if there be one such step—will be taken. It may be made by a student of the anatomy and physiology of the brain, it may be taken by a biochemist, by an anthropologist synthesizing the data of his science as Copernicus did the data of his, by an atomic physicist indeed, or by a religious seer, by a poet, or by a lonely seeker in a yet unnamed area of human endeavor.

We cannot know in advance these developments of the future, but we ought to be able to take some lessons from history to keep us on the beam. One such lesson is that all scholarship, including science and all the arts, tends to follow modes; and that a field becomes sterile precisely when it has become modish and accepted, when its vested interests are at their highest. We can see this in the histories of Greek sculpture and Greek geometry, in the history of all human endeavor. Recently we saw it in the judgment of America's first winner of a Nobel Prize, Professor A. A. Michelson, who predicted in the early 1890's that the future of physics would be in the refinement of measurement rather than in new discovery.

Yet the lesson of the history of all human advance is in the history of man finding new problems and then finding ways to solve them. So the physicists did in the period following Michelson's statement. Some of them, somehow, broke away from what was modish and accepted; they broke away from measurement and discovered X-rays and radioactivity. And then began a period which was one of the greatest in the development in physics that the world ever has seen.

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No supporters of research—foundations, industries, private donors, government—could have predicted the discovery of these new problems and their solutions, much less dreamed of their effects upon the world. Only those givers and administrators of funds who had as their philosophy and practice that they would give able men opportunities to do what these men wanted to do were, or could be, of any help.

Givers and administrators of funds to assist research and creative work ought to know that they have no future if their role is that of a priest of the accepted gods looking askance at the new. Certainly one of their principal tasks should be to recognize changes in value, to see men glimpsing new possibilities and new avenues for thought and expression, and to help them to do what they want to. Likewise, there must be understanding that there are great traditionalists and great innovators both; they must clearly understand that the accepted gods often are good gods, often better than the new. But whether the good gods be old or new, there must be understanding that to be exponents and strongholds of free enterprise in things of the mind and spirit is the administrators' only possible role, if their purpose is the highest good of mankind.

Such are my principles, such—I dare to say—is my administrative theology. It is what I believe in, can't help believing "out of experience under the burden of responsibility." To be an administrator according to these concepts is, I assure you, an utterly wonderful thing. The exponent of these principles recognizes always that he is not omniscient and thus he does not have to play the Almighty, which makes things a lot simpler. He does not try to usurp the management of people's lives and minds. He regards himself, clear-sightedly, as a gardener nurturing the high-yield, high-quality strains—always with an eye for the hopeful mutants, the significant hybrids. If one does not find pleasure in these things, in doing them this way, he ought, I suggest, get out of the game. For if he proceeds, as a commercial florist does, to "force" his plants to early bloom to make him a commercial crop for the day, he will leave the world no better off but weakened as those strains that are significant for the future run out under his all-for-today manipulations.



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It is not revealed to you or me, or to any other givers or administrators of funds, what ought to be done as most useful to the state or society; and therefore we cannot validly erect a design of inquiry. We are good operators only if we know we do not know what is the Great Design and only if we make our institutions into strongholds of free enterprise in things of the mind and spirit.

It is clear from the record that Daniel Coit Gilman proceeded so; and Welch and Osler, Gildersleeve, Sylvester and Remsen, Rowland, Halsted and Abel are the proof that it is a good way, and probably the only way to proceed. Indeed, President Gilman made it explicit that this was his way at a convocation of the University of Chicago in 1903, following his retirement from The Johns Hopkins. He had disclaimed expertness in any branch of knowledge. "Yet," he said, "I am an observer of the progress of science, who has had opportunities, prolonged, and in some respects unique, for watching, and now and then for helping, the workers, to whom appreciation and sympathy could at least be offered; often, pecuniary support; once in a while, counsel; sometimes, defense; always admiration."

"Always admiration!" Mark it well; for, at bottom, it is the administrative idea that the administrator, somehow, is better than the worker that makes him think that he, who is in fact the camel, is entitled to crowd the intellectual pilgrim out of his tent. It is only when the cultural administrator knows that his only function, like the camel's, is to bear the burdens of the intellectual pilgrim that he can be good at his task.

But I am getting ahead of my story—my sermon, if you prefer, as I do, to call it so. I have been thinking of some words of Hans Zinsser's that go like this: "The administrative camel has crowded the intellectual pilgrim out of his tent."

This is my text. This is the sin my sermon is against. Zinsser's statement, my experience tells me, is true; and this, my administrative theology tells me, is wrong. And the condition, no doubt, has worsened since 1929 when Zinsser declared it.

It has worsened with the proliferation of all kinds of funds, national councils, governmental projects, professional associations,



money for specified industrial research, donors intent on getting certain things done—worsened most with the multiplication of the planners, the do-gooders, and the whole kit and caboodle of those who are sure they know best.

Continuing as any Puritan divine who will not be deterred from exploiting his text, I must remind you that this sin that I am against is not only imposed upon your academic world from without but also flourishes within that world by its own making. In that world, too, are learned expositors who are untroubled by doubts, Keepers of the Seal who get the shudders if someone develops suspicions that a traditional view of the past may be in error. In your own world, I fear your little administrators, and especially your would-be administrators, your co-ordinators, your integrators, your setters-up of plans and charts and tables of organization and mechanisms. You are letting the smart operators get into the drivers' seats; and, when they do, the horses of single harness, the hopeful mutants, the significant hybrids, the essentially lonely seekers do not stand a chance.

How the administrative camel keeps himself under the university tent is a development of the sin I have to reveal; and the story, I fear sadly, goes like this: In the big academic worlds, men who enjoy the kind of work called administration normally become chairmen or directors or other administrators. Such men recognize and are drawn to their kind, with whom they are at ease; and, thus, year by year, the selection of men for university posts tends to proceed in this direction. This is not the result of design—there is no plot here!—but is mainly a direction of congeniality of temperament that, consciously or unconsciously, wishes *too much* the result that is commonly called co-operation. You see what the process does: it tends gradually to eliminate the significant variants, the persons who are interested in unfamiliar ideas, those who lack a definitive label, those whose interest and bent cannot be named by a word, those lonely seekers whose intellectual curiosity and creative imagination come to flower and fruition only when left alone, unco-operatively except as they themselves seek out kindred souls.

In the long run this process spells suicide, almost by definition.

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For civilization does not advance by treading the familiar paths; and we cannot afford to miss any of the very rare persons who will find new paths and, treading them, will pioneer the future.

Co-operation, I remind you, is only one of the littler virtues, necessary for fellows like me; but its lack is of no account in fellows like some of you.

My catalogue of the variants of the sin I am against is not yet done, and the variant I shall now expose is a joint sin of the foundations and of the universities. It arises, and it arises often, when funds are offered for particular purposes. Then the pressures are on the scholars, by the administrators of the funds and of the recipient universities, to turn aside from the problems that interest them or to remold those interests to fit into an over-all method. I have seen this happen, with the presiding officer gently urging the lonely seekers to get into this new game, to learn how to play it and perhaps even help improve it, perhaps even make it honest. But however gentle the prodding is, it is still the spinach of controlled, co-operative effort that is being offered, with a coaching staff that gives and gets the dollars calling the plays. It is still another variant of Hans Zinsner's warning against "forgetting that discovery was ever a solitary task, in which cooperation must be spontaneous, asked, as the need arises, by one lonely seeker from another."

If this sermon were being preached in a New England of the eighteenth century, instead of in less-dour Baltimore in this twentieth, my catalogue would be longer. I should, no doubt, even feel it necessary to advert unkindly to the effects that great quantities of public money made available in the effort of the Great War had in raising intellectual mediocrities to responsible positions in cultural matters, and to the time it will take them—if they ever can—to recover their sense of moral responsibility for the money they spend. I was told by one of them that the \$30,000,000 of the Guggenheim Foundation would only be peanuts in the postwar scientific dish, and I think this makes it very clear what is this particular sin that I am against.

But instantly that I spoke of "less-dour Baltimore in the twentieth" century, you and I both knew I was wrong. What makes me

wrong is war and the shadow of war. In this twentieth century, few scholars can escape the fact that they may have to be called upon to contribute what they know, to do what they would not choose to do were conditions otherwise, to bring to imperfect practical results what their scholarly conscience tells them is not good enough for translation into operations. When all that we hold dear may be at stake, the issue is not money nor who controls the money, nor what we like or do not like. We must stand on high ground or we shall not stand at all.

The high ground on which you and I ought to take our stand is this: we are sure that only from the products of freedom of inquiry and creation can come the salvation of the world from the ills and doubts now besetting us. Thus our first duty is to try to keep things so that individual men can reach and grasp higher than hitherto, else the complexities and ills of the world will overwhelm us. The past is obviously not good enough. We must be sure and we must act surely so that the spirit of free inquiry and creation flourishes. We must know that this spirit is a function, in the mathematicians' sense of the term, of individual freedom, and that individual freedom, in turn, is a function of constitutional government—of, by, and for the people.

One of the clarifications of the postwar years is that the condition of stable peace in a world now as interconnected as the world now is, likewise is dependent on governments predominantly of, by, and for the people. Repression—mental, moral, and physical—is the grand ingredient of tyranny; tyranny is the grand ingredient of aggression. Years of clarification have shown the progression to be as simple as that.

We must be sure of this: Governments—even those of, by, and for the people—are necessarily much concerned with any present time, the time during which the governmental operations are going on. In a time such as this present, government must predominantly be concerned that the status quo does not deteriorate: governmental actions must be predominantly holding actions on the battle lines of civilization—important holding actions, to be sure, but nonetheless holding actions. The way to the life that interests us cannot



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be won except by the processes of education and creative thought, and these are slow processes. If governments of, by, and for the people can hold the line while these processes develop, they are probably doing the most they can.

The application of this kind of thinking for all educational institutions is clear in principle: just as freedom is the grand ingredient of constitutional government and of peace in the world, so also is freedom the grand ingredient of all education beyond the primary stages. It is clear that no pathbreaking can take place, none of our moral and spiritual capital can be renewed, none of our values can be stated and developed, unless there be maintained in America a climate of the mind and spirit and body that makes this place the stronghold of the rights that we sum up as freedom. That sum is at once the cause and the result of our strength—our internal and external strength, for both the long and the short term. Freedom is, as Elihu Root once said, the supreme treasure of our country.

This also said Detlev Bronk, thinking in terms of the materials of which he is master, in his Benjamin Franklin Lectures: Freedom is the grand ingredient of the great adventures of the human mind.

In the long run—given the present state of the development of technologies for war, repression, and aggression—our supreme treasure cannot, probably, be maintained unless the world is at peace. This is the other side of the shield; and scholars and creative workers, no less than other men, had better be aware of it. Thus it is that the governmental holding actions may be the most important things to be done in any present, may be so important that they must preclude the doing of practically anything else. But we err if we ever regard them as anything but static, holding actions.

Before I go on, I think I ought to pause to remind you again that I regard myself as an operator and not a philosopher, just as—as a lawyer—I am a case lawyer and not a jurist. Thus, the operational possibilities in any situation will always restrict any ringing declarations I might philosophically otherwise feel called to make, and therefore I will not make the declaration that the pressures for governmental research are ruining scholarship in the universities. But I would hasten to add that too much of it would.



## HENRY ALLEN MOE

I will not make the declaration for I recognize that much governmental support is well administered and is granted for pure science—whatever that may mean exactly—and not applied. And even if it were applied, I still would not make the declaration; for I recognize that many good scholars work best, and do their best work, when they are under some pressure, not with respect to their ways of doing things, but for what are commonly called results. Men differ, good men differ; and this is one of the ways in which they differ.

Within the limits of my ability, or rather inability to generalize operationally desirable propositions, I shall say that the touchstone of the desirability of acceptance of governmental funds should be the national interest, and that goes either for the long- or short-term interest.

Having stated my operational proposition, I must go on to say that it does not operate itself. Those operationally responsible must know their staffs, their interests, their predilections, their desires, their bents; they must realize that quantity of governmental support is an important consideration. As those funds become proportionately larger, more and more essential becomes the catalyzing influence of free funds from foundations, private givers, and industry. Those who have the welfare of our country at heart must not leave the support of the potential pathfinders to the mercy of any one source.

The large question is truly on what is the national interest. In the absence, or even in the presence, of a declaration of policy as to that interest, it seems to me to be particularly the public duty of educated men to assist in its formulation, by action if not by words. We Americans have never been backward either in expressing opinions of national policy already formulated, or in expressing opinions which cause policy to be formulated. I think strongly that now is the time for educated men to express opinions and do acts which cause executive policy to be made. I am thinking, of course—operator that I am—of what is particularly within our competence to think about: education, scholarship, discovery; of all those values which dignify, ennoble, and delight mankind; of

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his intellectual and moral wealth, the working capital of men and nations.

I am thinking of what you and I know, that never before, in recent history at any rate, has the margin between what we know and what we use been so thin: the stockpile of unused knowledge is much too low for safety. I am thinking that as good fruit cannot be gathered from any plant long neglected and undernourished, so new fruit cannot be called into being by wish or command, but only genetically after long lines of breeding. So it is with a reservoir of trained minds and a stockpile of knowledge, old or new; you cannot produce either without long periods of support and training; and you certainly cannot get them either by fiat or longing. It does no good, as is our fashion when an emergency comes, to make an appropriation and demand a miracle. We—you and I—must think and act so that the stockpile of trained ability is ready when needed. There is no higher national interest than this, no matter who forgets it now.

I am thinking, gratefully, that we are not oppressed by anything like the medievalism of the Lysenko genetics; but I worry a great deal to see the shrinking of our intellectual and cultural and material freedom. I worry about that not only for ourselves but also for its example to the world. I worry about the ease with which a few ignorant and irresponsible men can make conditions of governmental service, including the doing of research for the common good in the universities, all but unbearable for gifted and devoted men. I worry about these things more, because, recently, conditions were not so in this our beloved America. The power of our freedom was such that, here at any rate, it seemed that the dream of the brotherhood of man need not be dreamed in vain. You and I must think and act to make the great American dream have present value; and, again, I declare there is no higher national interest, internally and externally, than this.

I am thinking now of what Lewis Galantière has said and said well: "When a nation . . . attains to world leadership, it preserves that rank only so long as its culture—which is to say not merely its achievements in the humanities but also its manners and beliefs and

civil institutions—commands respect and some degree of emulation. For though leadership is conquered by power it is maintained over a significant span of time only with the free assent of the led; and free assent is given only to moral and not to material authority . . .”

Thinking this way, you will see that he serves best the national interest who does his best in any of the higher ranges of the mind and spirit.

“These are the conditions of world leadership. Without them wealth and might lead only to hatred, conspiracy and revolt against the physically dominant power. The Romans themselves, who were not the most sympathetic personalities, carried with them their language and its prodigious literature wherever they conquered; and when Roman arms had ceased to prevail, when Rome itself was no longer a capital, Roman law and Roman Christianity sufficed for centuries to hold the Germanic barbarians in awe of the name of Rome.”

I wish I had grounds to be sure that university presidents generally understand this as well as some generals and admirals do.

Abraham Lincoln, then a member of the Congress debating the issues of the Mexican War, asked President Polk to remember that he sat where Washington had sat and, having remembered, to answer as Washington would have answered. As I prepared this paper I did not forget to remember that I would stand, as I now stand humbly, where stood Thomas Henry Huxley delivering the first of these Founders’ Day addresses seventy-five years ago this date. I confess I did not dare read his paper until I had written my own; and then I took heart, for I found that my authentically great predecessor had said what I have tried to say:

So sure as it is that men live not by bread, but by ideas, so sure is it that the future of the world lies in the hands of those who are able to carry the interpretation of nature a step further than their predecessors; so certain is it that the highest function of a university is to seek out those men, cherish them, and give their ability to serve their kind full play.

If I shall be deemed to have said anything to make the application of Huxley’s principles of freedom more clear to twentieth-

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century conditions, I shall be content. For in this place, seventy-five years ago, was created the first American type of university. The magnitude of the accomplishment was not less than that, and it would be most fitting that the next development of Gilman's and Huxley's heritage of excellence, developed in accordance with their principles of freedom, should have its next highest plateau of continuance here, under Bronk. That is my best wish for The Hopkins as you proceed toward your centennial: there can be no higher wish in this place, for freedom is the propulsive power of American civilization.

*And I honor the man who is willing to  
sink  
Half his present repute for the freedom to  
think,  
And, when he has thought, be his cause  
strong or weak  
Will risk t'other half for the freedom  
to speak.*

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL  
“A Fable for Critics”



# DELAYING ACTION

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*by William Sambrot*

**T**HE TOUGH sergeant stands at the foot of the ramp leading down from the big plane and calls out your name and you whisper "Here," through a curiously constricted throat. It's raining and cold; your pack and rifle press against your back and you shiver as you line up before the waiting trucks which pound and roar in the deep alien mud. You are not yet twenty and you're scared.

You were proud of yourself, in Tokyo (it seems like only last week) as you marched along, vigorously, and the hard clean jets swished by overhead. The crowds gaped and it was swell to be nineteen, shouldering a gun in the army of occupation. Wish my girl could see me now, you thought then . . .

The sergeant barks his orders, his voice strangely lost in the thunder of the big babies as they let down flaps and come dropping onto the field somewhere in Korea. You're not proud anymore. There's no joking or yelling now. You climb up into the truck, a straining aching feeling in the pit of your stomach.

The truck rumbles along, keeping its distance from the one ahead, and over the sides of the truck you see the rice paddies and the sullen monotonous rain. The empty faceless ruins of war.

"They say we're taking a beating," someone whispers. Funny how that shivery feeling in your stomach makes you want to whisper.

"What will I do?" you wonder. You have never fired a shot in anger—or been fired upon. You are only nineteen and you joined up a year ago because everyone else in your little town in Kansas was joining up. You went to Japan and were treated with respect by men who were older than your father. It was a nice feeling. You became a trifle arrogant—oh, not much, but after all, you were an American—and so young.

The trouble had started and you chafed like a young colt, anxious to get in it. Other outfits all around you had been alerted and moved

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on—but you remained behind. You had grown bitter. What would the folks back home say? The rout had swelled into triumph—but still you stayed. And then, like the roaring plunging debris when the dam bursts, *they* had come from beyond the Yalu, smashing and tumbling everything before them.

Now they called you. Now it was your turn—and triumph had turned into deadly, inch-by-inch tug of war. Now it was your turn.

The quick little jeeps bypass your truck in a flurry of mud. You see grim men in them looking straight ahead, and faintly, through the soggy air, you hear distant thunder. You've heard it before—but only in practice. The big guns.

The tension, the whispering, the never ending secrecy. Why doesn't somebody tell us the score? What's going on? Are we really going to the front? Where's all our planes? Are we the only ones? *What's the score?*

The trucks pull up and you hop down, form your squads, and wait. The jeep comes by and you recognize your captain. He whispers hurriedly to your sergeant and then speeds on. You glance at the truck driver and he glances back, coldly impersonal; remote. He'll be going back—but you'll stay.

The sergeant is talking. The UN forces have been temporarily thrown back in this area. We've got to give our units a chance to pull out. We're to deploy over that ridge and fight a delaying action. Bazooka teams step forward. Ammo carriers load packs at the weapons carrier. That's you. You stand around and wait at the weapons carrier and you hear someone whisper, "This is it!"

It's a worn cliché. You've heard it ever since you saw your first war movie. But—this is it. You're not back in Kansas, with your girl's hand warm and soft in yours, the deep, kind Kansas night outside the theater and the gang to be met in Pop's Ice Cream Parlor after the show. This is Korea and you are here, in a muddy road, with the chilling scent of death all about you.

You hike along, keeping your distance, toward the ridge. Now you can distinctly hear the "whoompf" of the mortars, the shrill obscene cackle of machine guns. You've already seen the jeeps coming back, with canvas flung over their oddly distorted cargoes of

## WILLIAM SAMBROT

death. It isn't real. All you want is to close your eyes and sink into a soft snug ball; to go back, back, into the deep dark warm spot which was the only real security you ever knew.

"Hit it! Hit it!"

The cry comes back and you go down, instinctively, without thought. Then you see it, a dim gray bulk; a monolithic shape against the ridge, slithering and whirring, like a giant blind snake—deadly, cold—the tank.

Its snout whirls slowly and suddenly it winks toward you and with dull amazement you see the little plops of flying mud where the bullets are striking. You see men jerk and gasp and you realize it is real. It's shooting at you. It's killing Americans—and you are an American.

You crawl without thought and find a foxhole. You roll in and the water nearly covers you. You don't wonder how many men crouched where you are crouching; how many, with glazing eyes, saw their last bit of earth in the foxhole from which you can only stare, hypnotized, at that gray evil tank.

It swings ponderously, one track spinning on the mucky ground, the other locked, and waddles off to stop near a miserable half-broken mud hut. It waits.

"All right soldier, let's get that tank."

Someone is talking to you. The sergeant. He's talking to *you*. He wants *you* to join the man with the bazooka and you remember the heavy pack on your back for the first time. The rockets. He wants *you* to climb out of this icy water-filled hole and join another man; form a team, crawl nearer that horrible still thing blending with the mud hut. To kill it.

What do you do when you are nineteen, from Kansas, with all your life ahead of you? What do you do when every fiber of you cries for soft dark quiet; to shut your eyes and fade from sight? What do you do when you're nineteen, scared, and ordered out into the open against a thing which is so coldly implacable, so sure that you, little flesh and blood you, can do it no harm:

What do you do?

You climb out of the hole and crawl forward—toward the tank.

## *To R. L. S.*

*Monterey, California*

*August 1950*

Dear Sir: Tonight the fishing boats went out  
From this, your town, where you knew love and warmth,  
And shared convivial wine, and almost drank  
The brackish brew of a disheartened death—  
But lived to write your own clean epitaph,  
Those quiet words, "Home is the sailor, home . . ."

You lived, in time, so long ago that now  
My small son thinks you a contemporary  
Of Robin Hood and Plato and King Saul  
(In which odd company you might find mirth);  
To him the dead are all antique and strange.  
But, in my mind, you were tonight not far  
In time or space. You stood in Monterey,  
Beside us on a hill to scan the Bay,  
Gray-blue and ruffled like a chance-dropped shawl  
With a white fringe of fog, the boats  
Like careless fingers tangled in the fringe.

I hope you saw, dazed as you may have been  
By superficial change, much was the same.  
Only the personal fisherman was home,  
Moored in his harbor, not to sail again.  
Men who were not yet born when you were here  
Turned now their faces to the open sea,  
And my own restive child wished he were grown  
Stronger and ready to push out from shore.  
Were all the lights, like spilled beads, a confusion?  
My girl-child named the stars; those have not changed.



As we were coming down the hill again,  
I spoke your words, "And the hunter home from the hill."  
My growing girl asked, "Is that Stevenson?"  
I answered "Yes," and my small boy cried, "Where?"  
Darting his curious eyes from side to side,  
For he is eager to encounter friends.  
He surely thought to see you on the path  
And was chagrined to hear you were long dead.

No, you remained unspied, a private ghost.  
Across the years, across the gulf between,  
I write these lines in greeting and farewell,  
For you and I have here had comparable  
Joy and distress wash over us like tides.  
With seaweed for a stamp, an envelope  
Of morning mist, I send this note to you,  
Dropped in a groove between two breaking waves.

AGNES BRACHER

# POETIC & PROSAIC: PROGRAM NOTES ON OPPOSITE NUMBERS

SOME program notes on the differences between "poetic" and "prosaic" are justified by this situation: we know that poetry isn't prose, and yet we often read it as if it were. Our working assumption, which runs counter to our conscious knowledge and which we successfully hide from ourselves, is that poetry *is* in fact a kind of prose; and that is where our troubles begin. We read poetry prose-mindedly—and nothing happens. The poetry is at fault, we are inclined to think privately, though aloud we may good-naturedly blame our own incapacity. Yet even that good-natured blame is misdirected. The failure is not one of capacity but of a kind of awareness. We face a special problem of consciousness, indeed one which includes more than the recognition of poetry and prose as fundamentally different kinds of expression. For if prose determines or influences what we expect of poetry, so daily informal speech strongly influences what we expect of both prose and poetry—that is, of literature generally. We see literature drawing, for the most part, upon words that we use all the time, and so we are unconsciously inclined to expect it to use words much as we do in daily nonliterary intercourse.

In all phases of life the ordinary exerts a tremendous pressure upon us, and it is constantly trying to con-

vince us that it is the sum of all truth (especially in the "century of the common man"). And since words have to perform so many very ordinary functions, the ordinary usage of words tends to become absolute. So strong is the impression of inevitability made by the patterns of daily speech that, to many writers, "write as you speak" is a decalogue supposed to guarantee entire literary virtue. But for any writing that hoped to be something more than ordinary, this command would be a disastrous handicap.

By way of a start, we are arguing not only that prose must be distinguished from poetry but also that, in an analogous way, prose *and* poetry—the whole realm of literature—must be distinguished from the realm of everyday utilitarian language. Now, to avoid oversimplifying, let us make some preliminary concessions: in certain ways these opposed realms do influence, encroach on, and even extend into each other.

1. We must admit that there are affinities between intelligent spoken English and certain kinds of prose—especially the expository prose that appears in newspapers, magazines, textbooks: the realm of "nonfiction." Though the subjects may be extraordinary, the main business is ordinary communication. Here we

by Robert B. Heilman

have prosaic prose, the common life of nonmetrical discourse. This is the prose that poetry isn't; yet, like a secret agent, it quietly nourishes our expectations about poetry and causes poetry to be badly read.

2. On the other hand, various kinds of prose work like poetry and require a similar awareness. In this sense they are both "literature" and hence cannot be apprehended in the same way in which we apprehend what is said over the phone about a business trip. Such prose makes special use of suggestion and concentration, of marked rhythms, of figurative language (note the terms "poetic prose," "prose poem," and "polyphonic prose"), and hence may be thought of as using language in a poetic way. (It is worth while to recall that the word *poetry* was once used with about the same sense that we in the twentieth century give to the word *literature*.)

3. What is more, even in the most commonplace communication (spoken prose) there are occasional bursts of poetry—for instance, in slang, which, before mass usage has planed it down into a flat literalism, has the concentrated, imaginative quality of figurative language. Before it died of overwork, "He is a drip" was in effect a short symbolic poem. (So the commonplace proser, unlike the Molière character who was astonished to find that he had been speaking prose all his life, can be sur-

prised at the fact that he has spoken *some* poetry all his life.)

4. Conversely, if the poetic may at spots infiltrate into prose, so poetry may be subverted by the prosaic. There is a kind of prosy verse, or pseudo poetry, which looks like the real thing, for it is tricked out in an ensemble of nonprosaic finery. Any prose can be dressed up in meter and rhyme, just as a young lady can be draped with fashionable elegance or use traditional devices of beautification, regardless of her degree of intelligence, beauty, or virtue. When is verse prose? Well, when we read such lines as these by Wordsworth—

'Tis now some two-and-twenty  
years  
Since she (her name is Martha  
Ray)  
Gave, with a maiden's true good  
will,  
Her company to Stephen Hill;  
And she was blithe and gay,

we instinctively laugh, as we probably would not do if the same statements were printed like prose. The typographic arrangement of verse is incongruous with the prosiness of the language, which is the same kind of language we might use in phoning the grocer or transmitting personal histories over a highball. The statements are logical and factual, like those of most of our conversation and of the world of plain expository prose; there are no images or fig-

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ures, no level of suggested meaning which we must get at imaginatively instead of by the direct, literal understanding which will take us through most of the world of prose. The author tells everything, heavy-handedly, with no discreet compression. He writes straight prose, untransfigured by its perceptible rhythm and rhyme (which themselves seem funny when attached to such an encyclopedic case history).

From the affair of Martha Ray and Stephen Hill and its rhymed journalism, let us go on to the main issue. We have noted various cross-currents between literary and non-literary discourse, between prose and poetry. Now, then, what is poetry that is poetry? First of all, it is plain that it has to be something more than prose plus nonprosy sound effects: we can't turn a news dispatch into a ballad or epic by prettying it up with lilt and echo. But a better way to define is to look at examples, and not even examples which use a highly concentrated poetic style. The differentness, the poeticality, of "difficult" poetry is obvious; there is no need to prove that it is something more than especially embellished prose. Let us look rather at several pieces of poetry in which the surface difficulty is not forbidding, and in which a "prose awareness" will take us part of the way into the meaning. In these poems most of the statements even look like prose. But more is said than appears to be said by the prose-like combinations of verbal units. The poetry communicates something

that is not explicitly said by the grammar and syntax. The whole is very much more than the sum of its parts.

Shelley's "Ozymandias" is a sonnet which appears to have an essential straightforwardness:

I met a traveler from an antique land  
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless  
legs of stone  
Stand in the desert. Near them, on  
the sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies,  
whose frown,  
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of  
cold command,  
Tell that its sculptor well those  
passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on  
these lifeless things,  
The hand that mocked them, and  
the heart that fed:  
And on the pedestal these words  
appear:  
'My name is Ozymandias, King of  
Kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and  
despair!'  
Nothing beside remains. Round  
the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless  
and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch  
far away."

The immediate content of the poem, despite a slight difficulty of syntax in lines six and seven, is clear enough; the main part of it describes an immense antique statue which has fallen apart on its site in a vast desert. The statue is inscribed with the proud boast of the king whom it memorializes. Now, the words of the poem do not say outright, as prose would do,



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"How foolish was the pride of the king, who thought the greatness of his works could cause only despair to others!" But the parts are so arranged as to communicate this meaning; we see, side by side, the king's boast and the dilapidation of the statue which symbolized the greatness; we see the "sneer of cold command"—but we also see it imprinted on a "shattered visage." The images are placed in ironic juxtaposition, and the meaning flows from the contrast. The words do not say outright, "The boast of greatness is still more foolish because greatness can not exist in the midst of an unproductive country; and if the country was once productive, then we must conclude that the greatness was not sufficient to prevent sterility and death." Instead of using this prose method the sonnet simply gives us two pictures: one of the boastful statue, the other of the surrounding desert. The futility of Ozymandias' self-glorification is represented imaginatively, not stated overtly. Again, the poem does not say, "Power has meaning only when it is exercised over people; it can be created only by others who recognize it and revere it." It merely calls the sands "lone": this one word implies the absence of all the humanity who could make greatness meaningful. The sands are "level"; no constructions exist which could distinguish the human from the non-human. The sands are "boundless": there is no limit to this waste in which power and pride are meaningless. Or take the phrase "colossal wreck,"

which may seem at first to be just a handy descriptive phrase, something out of a geography, but in which we feel that there is a little more than a casual picture. For *colossal* suggests the huge and the complete, and *wreck* suggests a loss of size and form; so together the words form a paradox that reminds us at once of the extraordinary aspiration and the tremendous failure. Without going any further into meaning, or into the effects of rhyme and rhythm, we can see how the poem works; we can sense its ultimate point, that the despair which Ozymandias apportioned to others was really his own due. Inflated pride is close kin to despair.

But the words have said no such thing directly. Poetry does not convey its meanings by logical propositions or by expository statements. Rather, it presents images which are condensations of meaning, and it arranges these images in relationships in which they must interact with each other and thus stimulate us to explore the whole situation which they set forth. Our word *interact* is really a giveaway: the poem is a kind of verbal drama, in which the images (and everything else used by the poet—rhythms, connotations, etc.) play their parts like actors on a stage. If poetry is like a theatrical performance, prose is like a lecture on a platform; each has its usefulness but each uses a different idiom, not interchangeable with the other.

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One asks us to understand, the other asks us to enter into an imaginative game. Poetry confers partnership upon us: we participate in the creation of the meaning by making inferences from the images. In imaginative exercise as well as in ethics it is better to give than to receive. Yet in this assistance at creation we are playing an orderly game, not romping wildly: the better the poet's images are controlled, the more likely our inferences are to be of a certain kind. Well-managed images do not permit an infinite number of inferences, though it is the nature of the suggested meaning of poetry, in contrast to the commanded meaning of prose, to be rich and manifold rather than thin and single. Prose excludes all but one thing; poetry invites us to bring in everything relevant, even at the risk of complications. Poetry engages us, prose tells us. It is only when we expect to be told that we have serious difficulty at the threshold of poetry. As a matter of moral habit, few people like to be told; but, as a matter of everyday experience, language does so much telling—recounting, explaining, informing, recording—that we tend to expect it to do so even when it is playing an entirely different role. Poetry invites us to escape the tyranny of everyday life and find independence under a harder taskmaster—one who expects initiative and active collaboration rather than literal obedience.

Now let us take a poem in which the poet deliberately uses a rather prosy rhythm — “Bells for John

Whiteside's Daughter,” by John Crowe Ransom:

There was such speed in her little body,  
And such lightness in her footfall,  
It is no wonder that her brown study  
Astonishes us all.

Her wars were bruited in our high  
window.  
We looked among orchard trees and  
beyond,  
Where she took arms against her  
shadow,  
Or harried unto the pond.

The lazy geese, like a snow cloud  
Dripping their snow on the green grass,  
Tricking and stopping, sleepy and  
proud,  
Who cried in goose, Alas,

For the tireless heart within the little  
Lady with rod that made them rise  
From their noon apple-dreams, and  
scuttle  
Goose-fashion under the skies!

But now go the bells, and we are ready;  
In one house we are sternly stopped  
To say we are vexed at her brown study,  
Lying so primly propped.\*

This sounds like someone talking, slowly and even awkwardly. It is certainly not “poetic” in the popular sense of the word. Yet it makes for genuine poetic effect; it is as if the speaker were refusing to give way to his emotion, but carefully controlling it; by keeping it down, giving dramatic proof of its reality. Further, the muted, somewhat irregular rhythm helps the poem by guarding against the obvious pathos into

\* Reprinted from *Selected Poems*, by John Crowe Ransom, by permission of the publishers, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

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which an elegy for a young child might easily collapse. With its danger of sentimentality and cliché, the theme is difficult, and Ransom runs a further risk by treating the child's death in a somewhat traditional way—in terms of the contrast between life (movement) and death (motionlessness). Yet there are no hackneyed statements on this theme; the prosaic possibilities are fought off. Ransom does not talk abstractly about movement and motionlessness; rather, he gives us concrete images of life and death. Stanzas two, three, and four, which show the child in life, do not keep saying that she was lively; they do not say it at all. Instead they use a special image of liveliness: the image of war. This not only gives a picture of the ultimate in physical energy, but by its irony—the irony of a little girl as warrior—it further counteracts the danger of the obvious. A similar ironic counteraction lies in the humorous lament of the victims, who “cried in goose, Alas.” Only the word *tireless* (l. 13) literally names the thing being communicated to us; but in the wealth of images which are the real tools of the poem, we hardly notice this abstraction, which is a supplement, not a substitute. The contrasting image of death appears fully in stanza five. It has been introduced in stanza one, which does come very close to direct statement. In fact, part of the effect lies in the fact that lines one and two start off in a plain, almost prosaic way; suddenly the prose logic vanishes when we come

upon images that shock us by their unexpectedness. Death is called a “brown study,” as if it were a kind of intellectual exercise—something we would never say in prose. Next, the poem does not say that the brown study “grieves” observers, which would be the prose form of statement, but that it “astonishes” and “vexes” (ll. 4, 19) them—startling words which put us on the alert. *Astonishes*: the effect of the incongruous stillness. *Vex* is very interesting. It contains the meaning “to trouble,” “to afflict,” and even to “cause to grieve,” so that it can be read here literally, that is, prosaically; but it more commonly means “to annoy” or “to irritate,” and surely this is the meaning which immediately comes to mind. This is obviously a metaphor for “make grief-stricken.” But why use it? *Vex* has the advantage, over the literal word, (1) of being an understatement and (2) of being consistent with “brown study,” as if the child were so bent upon some pursuit of its own as to refuse to pay attention to someone who had a legitimate claim and thus to exasperate the someone. In the verbal structure of this poem, then, one emotion is expressed in terms of another, and the real strategy of evading sentimentality—which is the evoking of more emotion than the situation can produce—is the rather daring one of having a deep emotion represented



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by a rather transitory feeling; grief, by astonishment and vexation. In prose this would never do. Again, the last words, "primly propped," go beyond prose. They might describe a sticklike aged person, overproperly erect in a straight chair: i.e., in this child, whose recent aliveness meant great freedom of movement, the physical fact of death is an awkwardness as of advanced years and exacerbatedly decent behavior. "Primly propped" is not easy to articulate: the oral uncomfortableness is the final way of dramatizing the stiff gracelessness of death in the body that once moved easily and lightly (a movement imaged in the rapidity and fluency of the fourth stanza). This is another "trick" of poetry, with its manifold means of "dramatizing" rather than stating its idea. We could go on from here to see how Mr. Ransom's elegy exemplifies various of the other ways in which poetry is not prose. But all we want to do here is to pick out some of the ways, not to study the poem exhaustively.

We have been speaking of poetic language as being "dramatic"—that is, as being a kind of drama of images that act out their meaning rather than state it. For a final example of this nonprosaic functioning of language, let us turn to a slightly more complicated situation, that which we find in "dramatic poetry." Here we have drama in two dimensions—the action of characters (conflict within or between them) and the action of poetic language (contrast or tension or even

conflict among images). As in lyric poetry, the language is ultimately communicating to the reader, but it is communicating through an intermediary—the *dramatis personae*. So these words are, in a sense, double-voiced: the character and the author both speak them. Within the framework of the requirements of the character, the author has a considerable latitude in the choice of what he will communicate. He can, for instance, communicate what the character knows he is saying; he can communicate elements in the character (ideas, feelings, drives) of which the character is unaware or only partly aware; he can communicate a whole world of ideas and values within which the character acts and which help put him in moral perspective. The more mature the artist, the more he will try to communicate at all these levels. Now such richness of meaning is perhaps possible in prose; but the closer prose comes to being multidimensional in meaning, the closer it approaches the condition of poetry. For poetry is the prime medium for communicating more than meets the eye; of its nature it is at least twofold. There is always the foreground meaning, that which is identical with the images and comes across immediately (the picture of the broken statue, of the child chasing the geese), and then the background meaning, not immediate but implied, coming through when the imagination is fully aroused (the significance of the wrecked statue, surrounded only by sand; life as



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action contrasted with death as thought). In poetry something first meets the eye; then something else meets the inner eye. Hence it is appropriate to drama, which only in the last century has tried to speak in a one-dimensional prose—as if a character in a tense conflict of forces and values could talk like someone giving an order in the A & P.

For an example of the multiple communication of poetic drama, suppose we look at twenty lines early in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* (about 1590).

How am I glutted with conceit of  
this!  
Shall I make spirits fetch me what  
I please,  
Resolve me of all ambiguities,  
Perform what desperate enterprise  
I will?  
I'll have them fly to India for gold,  
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,  
And search all corners of the new-  
found world  
For pleasant fruits and princely  
delicates;  
I'll have them read me strange  
philosophy,  
And tell the secrets of all foreign  
kings;  
I'll have them wall all Germany  
with brass,  
And make swift Rhine circle fair  
Wittenberg;  
I'll have them fill the public  
schools with silk,  
Wherewith the students shall be  
bravely clad;  
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they  
bring,  
And chase the Prince of Parma  
from our land,  
And reign sole king of all our  
provinces;

Yea, stranger engines for the brunt  
of war,  
Than was the fiery keel at Ant-  
werp's bridge,  
I'll make my servile spirits to  
invent.

Sick of other kinds of learning (medicine, law, theology), Faustus has decided to practice black magic, to acquire knowledge that will produce, as it were, divine power. He yields momentarily to a flicker of conscience, fights it off, and then speaks the lines quoted above. It is the function of these lines to indicate the state of mind Faustus is in after making what is, for a great Christian scholar, a desperate resolve. On the surface it is not a hard speech, for Faustus talks in sentences of conversational word-order, and most of what he says can be taken literally. At least when he says he will "wall Germany with brass" it is clear that he means just that, and that his words are not intentionally allegorical or metaphorical. His words are prosy, perhaps? Yet they are not essentially prosaic. There is not a single abstract, summarizing statement in this speech; Marlowe does not permit Faustus to say, "I want power, I am going to have unlimited power, and I shall use it as I please." This meaning is there, of course. But Marlowe transmits it to us by giving us images of power in action as they whirl into the fancy of the power wielder.

This, however, is the tamest part of

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what these lines are doing. They are more exciting when they go beyond Faustus' intentions and tell us something about his emotional state, and are still more engaging when they carry us on into a third realm of meaning, that in which we face the problem of power. First, each image of power is not developed but is set down very briefly: this is the haste of a man who is very much excited. Then, the images are not logically arranged, but are scattered about incoherently: Faustus is excited to the point of being hysterical. Many of the images are extravagant: Faustus is not ambitiously planning an orderly future, but is on an intoxicated splurge. And while he cannot be said to be not serious—in fact there is great earnestness in his enthusiasm—the fact is that in the main his hopes amount to something rather Hollywoodish. What does he propose to do with his power? To hunt for wealth and rare delicacies: to perform tricks and put on shows. He mentions one political exploit—chasing the foreign ruler out of Netherlands, but only, be it noted, to grab the power himself. Faustus is an intellectual, but he proposes only one intellectual exploit—hearing “strange philosophy” (l. 9) and “the secrets of all foreign kings”; that is to say, being fascinated by exoticism and gossip. True, there is one really large aspiration, pathetic in its hopefulness: “resolve me of all ambiguities” (l. 3)—as if human experience could ever, except for the doctinaire, be free of doubt and uncer-

tainty. But if Faustus' hopes are trivial and extravagant, Faustus is not essentially a trivial or extravagant character. A major change is taking place in him, and in its communicating of this change the language takes on a new role: it moves from depiction to comment; it suggests the presence of meanings in which the character is involved without knowing it. Besides describing Faustus' intentions and betraying his emotions, it makes a value judgment: it embodies a discourse on power. Faustus will use his soul-bought power for selfish, trivial, or extravagant ends; since he is not that kind of person, his degeneration may be traced to the possession of unlimited power. Power is corrupting in itself. This comment is amplified in another aspect of the language which is very remarkable and yet may pass unnoticed. Throughout the preceding part of scene i (here one has to judge even the language of the part in respect to that of the whole), Faustus regularly refers to himself in the third person; now he suddenly shifts to the first person and in twenty lines uses the word *I* ten times, seven of them in conjunction with the verb *will*. This is an excellent dramatic use of language; the word *I* is an unobtrusive actor on the stage of ideas, not merely referring to the speaker but by its repeated presence telling us something important in a more general way—namely, that the possession of power means a tremendous release of egotism. Faustus is throwing off all restraints (at least he

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thinks he is), and what we see is unfettered individualism on a rampage. Power plus irresponsibility leads precisely to the kind of fantastic activity set forth in most of the imagery of the speech.

But this is never said directly, that is, prose-wise. The passage looks like prose; the individual statements are lucid and precise enough; but the meanings conveyed greatly transcend the logical contents of the various predications. Which is to say: poetry isn't prose.

To finish off this prose effort to distinguish prose and poetry, we might borrow just a little from poetic method. We've already said that prose is a lecturer on a platform, poetry is the actors on a stage. Other metaphors may suggest more than pages of analysis. Prose is as a photograph, utilitarian and outspoken; poetry is a painting, implying rather than representing. Prose is walking to a destination; poetry is a dance. There are two basic kinds

of action, to which we yield a different kind of awareness; all those on the poetry side elicit a special response that those on the prose side cannot. But yet—even these distinctions aren't final. For photography we find soberly trying to be not a business but an art; lecturers incline to be "dramatic"; there is a kind of walk which does not have a destination.

For a hundred years, prose of all kinds has been learning—better, re-learning—a great deal from poetry. Opposite forms modify each other; rigorous distinctions waver; fundamentally different attitudes commingle. Yet the different attitudes conform to realities of our communicative life. In any situation we must know whether the tone is poetic or prosaic — or draws upon both. Only then will we know how to listen.

## *Good-bye to Roses*

ADRIENNE CECILE RICH

Even at the withering instant of the year  
These petals pour on disapproving air  
Their passionate behavior. Even now  
Hints of an atrophied time must edge our season,  
But not dissolve our rich design—not yet.

Bravados of the garden, now good-bye.  
The smell is sweet where ruin walks so near.  
We turn at last with autumn looks to where,  
Tranced in the steamy incense of the greenhouse  
Synthetic summer holds its ballet still.

In rain the greenhouse tinkles like a bell,  
But we shall hear in hail sharper alarms.  
We shall hear hailstones—and the time is soon—  
Beat down that fragile sanctuary of glass  
Where favored species wear their frail perfumes.

Come now, lest we should see before our eyes  
The failing of this final crimson spire,  
Condemned already by a darkening season.  
Our greenhouses will follow in their hour.  
All tender last diversions of suppose  
Betray us in the scattering of this rose.



# ANOTHER DAY

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*by Miriam Allen deFord*

WHEN he came home that night, she was dusting. It was an odd hour, but he felt comforted. All the way home he had seen her as she was when he left in the morning—silent, white, with pink spots under her strained eyes, smiling stiffly as she played with her coffee spoon and crumbled her toast.

"I'm back, darling!" he called with false cheerfulness, throwing his hat and coat on the couch so that she would have something to do, to pick them up and hang them away. "Busy?" he started to add, and bit the word. Better not ask any questions; not make her answer any.

"Hello," she said in an undertone. Thank God, she had stopped smiling. It was an insult, that smile; it implied, against all reason, that he was something outside, something to put on a pretense before. The house seemed cold and empty, too orderly, as if it were not lived in.

What should he say now? She spared him; she turned toward the kitchen.

"Wash up and sit down," she said in that same muffled voice. "Dinner will be ready in a minute. The first strawberries tonight." She smiled—a different smile, tremulous and appealing—and left him.

It hurt him to think of her out there in the kitchen, all shiny green tile and enamel; to remember her red-checked apron with the little bows, to hear the smart clang of the oven. Was Eleanor's own gay apron, yellow and green, still hanging by the door, he wondered. He should have thought of that—gone out last night and taken it away.

She swung open the kitchen door with her hip as he drew back his chair, both her hands holding the glass dish in its metal container.

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"Rice ring," she explained carefully. "You like that. And creamed sweetbreads."

Now he must start eating, watching each mouthful to see that she ate one, too. He must say, "Salt, dear?" and "May I have the butter, please?" A little resentment began to trickle up in him. Good God, Eleanor was his daughter, too. Why must he be shut out? He cast frantically about in his mind for some bit of news of the day that would not be a reminder of the day before, or the days before that.

"Martin got back this morning," he finally produced. His voice sounded abrupt and harsh to his own ears.

Bee was making designs with her fork in the mayonnaise on her salad. She saw his eyes on her, flushed a little, and choked on a hasty forkful. He pretended not to notice, went on talking against time.

"He won't be going away again for a month or six weeks. I wondered—he asked me if I wouldn't like to—if I'd mind taking my vacation now, start next week."

Her glance would not meet his. Couldn't she co-operate, just a little? He felt unutterably weary, pushing his words against an iceberg.

"We could go to Siasset," he stumbled on desperately. "It's a little early, but the inn is open. I phoned them this afternoon. Would you—would that be all right?"

Now he had asked a question. She would have to say something.

He could feel his heart beating. Something hurt his hand, and he looked down; he had grasped his knife so tightly that the blade was pressing into his thumb.

It wasn't true that when you drowned all your life flashed before you—he knew that because that time on the Merrimac, when the boat pulled him under, he had thought of nothing except that he couldn't breathe, and what a nuisance this was going to be to Dick. But he knew how it would have felt, for that very thing was happening to him now, as he waited for Bee to break that silence against which he could labor no longer.

"This is Friday." The words kept repeating themselves in his

head. Friday: last Friday Eleanor had sat over there, her blond young head erect against the mirror. She had been full of stories of Old Whoozis at the university. They had laughed like fools. Bee was so pretty when she laughed. Eleanor had had on her black-and-white silk that Bee said was too old for her; she had been going to a show with Wally in the evening. "Wear your own coat, my girl," Bee had said. "You can *not* have my velvet one again. You'll leave it in the theater or somewhere, and then I'll never be able to go out after dark." "Oh, Mother, you're priceless!" Eleanor had laughed. "When I'm the only responsible member of this family and you lose everything everywhere!" She had worn the velvet.

Bee was still sitting there without a word. He made one more effort; he could feel the sweat on his forehead.

"Or would you rather run down to the lake?" he said. "We could take the sleeping bags, and it oughtn't to be too cold. The fish might be biting; Hesketh told me they stocked it last September."

Friday. Saturday: Sunday: he didn't remember much about those. Sunday he had played golf with Durham, had been away all day. Monday when he came home from the office Eleanor was out. "Just us tonight," Bee had said. "They've gone to the country club for dinner and the dance, about eight of them. Wally stopped by for Eleanor."

"Well, I hope he'll bring her back early," he had answered. "I don't approve of these late nights when she has to be at college for a nine o'clock the next morning."

"Oh, well—" Bee had answered vaguely. Anything was all right with her. She would have spoiled Eleanor, if Eleanor had been spoilable. He never could protest much, knowing that it was the little girl in Bee having her vicarious good time—the little girl who had been defrauded, whose own youth had gone to an invalid widowed father and a troop of little brothers and sisters.

It had been five minutes past ten when the phone rang. He had been reading—that old book about Scott's last expedition to the Antarctic. Bee was doing a crossword puzzle, surreptitiously, with one eye on him, ashamed of being so unintellectual and unfashionable.

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"Listen to this," he had chuckled. "Did you ever hear of a man's eyes changing from brown to blue, just from going to the South Pole?"

"I never did," Bee smiled, widening her own eyes in that funny way. "Listen, Jack, what are islands south of China in six letters, ending in 's'?"

Then the phone rang.

He put his book down carefully, with the leather marker in it Eleanor had made for him in high school. It was Tom Sydney's book that he had borrowed, and he wanted to keep it in good condition.

"Hello. Who? Yes, this is Severn . . . *What?*"

That was Monday.

Bee was speaking to him at last. He wrenched his thoughts away.

"A lot more letters came today," she was saying. "From out of town. The Bartletts—they just heard. And my cousin Margaret in Boston."

"Yes, dear, I'll read them later." He must keep his voice gentle. "But you haven't answered me, Bee. Shall it be Siassett or the lake?"

Then it came. At last. All Bee's little face breaking up, the contours rumpling. It was a relief—a dreadful, terrible relief. He shoved back his chair and ran to her. She pushed him away, beating at him like a frightened bird, and he felt her strain from him as he pinioned her clenched fists and held her against him.

"I'm not going anywhere—not anywhere!" He could scarcely understand her for the sobs. "Oh, let me alone!"

"Beatrice!" It sounded like a shout—sounded like the way he used to say "Eleanor!" when she was little and defied him. But he was frightened; she mustn't, she mustn't go to pieces as badly as this. He tried to collect his thoughts, to remember how quiet she had been, ever since Monday. It was he who had given way, who had been blinded by tears so that he could not see Eleanor on the white stretcher, with blood in her gold hair. Bee had done everything, calmly, efficiently, like an automaton. She had made all the arrangements, talked to the undertaker, shaken hands and thanked people and written the notices. She had taken him home again that



night, driving quietly through the dark streets, and put a hot-water bottle in his bed and given him a dose of bromide. When he had gone back to the office today, for the first time, she had made popovers for his breakfast and helped him into his raincoat and waved from the front door. And she had made rice ring and creamed sweetbreads, and hulled the first strawberries waiting now out there in the kitchen.

"It is shock," the doctor had said. "Let her alone; she'll come out of it. Just stand by when the break comes."

This was the break.

He felt her shaking against him, but she did not cling to him. She was fighting him, fighting him hard. His left arm ached where that old fracture was; his nose itched and he rubbed it angrily against the shoulder raised to hold Bee's head. How much gray there was in her curly hair—he had never noticed it before. And that lock must be right in her eye—he tried to blow it away softly.

Something shiny on the buffet caught his glance—Eleanor's cut-glass olive dish that she had won as a prize in the eighth grade.

"I was the brightest girl in the class," she had said complacently, bringing it home hugged to her, "so they gave me this."

Bee was still at last. He released her gently—the top of his spine ached when he straightened up—and stood trembling while she fished for a handkerchief. She gulped from the water tumbler that shook in her hand.

Then she said an incredible, a horrible thing.

"Jack." She did not look at him. "You did—care a little for Eleanor, didn't you?"

He could only stare at her, his mouth open. He could not speak. This was worse than that awful moment when the voice on the phone said, "Your daughter has been killed."

And Bee went on, in that precise, grotesque croak.

"You hurt her that time—so badly—no one else ever—" She choked.

"When?" he gasped.

But his dazed mind was not on Eleanor. It was where it always was, where it had been for so many years, on Bee. He had a sudden

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memory of Bee as he had first seen her, her hair ruffled against the sunset wind, her hand out, palm up, to catch the dying warmth of the April day. Into that little hand he had laid his inarticulate heart, and it beat there yet. It ached there now, its rhythm stifled by her unbelievable words.

"When?" he repeated, not wanting to hear.

"That time—about Wally—"

He had a vague recollection of something—once, long ago, two years before: Eleanor just eighteen, just in the university. She had brought Wally home with her for the first time, a gangling youth too tall for his weight, with nice eyes like a puppy's and unruly red-brown hair.

"But—good God!"

He remembered now. It had been a foolish thing to say, a rude and idiotic thing, but he had been exasperated, outraged. Here was Eleanor scarcely out of diapers, and this boy mooning after her, unable to tear his gaze from her long enough to be civil to her mother. Bee had come into the room, and the boy, perfunctorily on his feet, had hardly nodded at the introduction. By heaven, he wanted nobody in his house who couldn't recognize that Bee was something special, who couldn't see that, Eleanor or no Eleanor, Bee was the bright particular star in the firmament. But you couldn't say that, of course; you couldn't make yourself out the sloppy, sentimental fool you were. You had to camouflage it, find another excuse for your resentment, shamefacedly aware that you were a clumsy, wordless creature relying on one person alone in all the world to understand and comfort and protect you.

It was the time of that Harrington affair, too; he had been working every night, worried almost sick, obsessed with fear that the whole business was going. Martin had been away; the whole thing had been on his shoulders. He had been almost sleepless for a week. Bee never knew how near the abyss they had been; she thought they had weathered the crisis easily. Easily!

He felt himself growing angry. So all this time that they had been giving Wally the run of the house, letting him and Eleanor drift into a taken-for-granted relationship, laughing tenderly at Eleanor's

lightning stroke of love, this thing had been lurking somewhere to strike at him now from out of Bee's fresh torture. Why, he had apologized to Eleanor that very evening; she had laughed and said, "Forget it, Dad." He *had* all but forgotten it. He had never held a grudge in his life: he had assumed that naturally Bee and Eleanor must be like him in that. Why should it be a living memory still to Bee—his Bee to whom he should be a thumbed and reread book—now that Eleanor lay with dust stopping her young mouth?

All the words he had spoken in all the years: and she had isolated twenty of them to erect a barrier between him and Eleanor—between him and herself.

"Keep your gutter friends on the campus, if you don't mind. Your mother and I prefer to associate with gentlemen."

Wally wasn't even there; he had gone. Eleanor had only just met him. They might never have seen him again, like others who had gaped at her heels. What did it matter? How was he to know that the two children had fallen in love at sight?

And hadn't he been extra decent to the boy ever since, in tacit apology for what Wally had never heard? He knew he was unjust, absurdly unjust, before the echo of his words had died. The boy wasn't a guttersnipe, of course; he was just gauche, and head over heels in his first passion. Eleanor surely had been like him himself—over the edge of anger into forgetfulness in a second. It was Bee—his Bee who was all things lovable and wonderful—who had remembered.

What was going on in her mind now? Was this, emerging through the crevice of her grief, some expiation of a fancied offense of her own against her daughter, never to be undone now, to be compensated for only by passing the burden on to another? Whatever it was, he must know. He could not go on with their years together—alone together—unknowing. If all this time Bee had been holding in silence an estrangement from him—no, they must both be mad, crazed by the anguish which that week had brought upon them. He took a grip on his thoughts.

"Bee, darling," he said as he would have spoken to Eleanor at three years, "listen to me. I loved Eleanor very dearly. I shall miss

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her and grieve after her all my life. You cannot, you must not doubt what she meant to me. It is monstrous." He stopped abruptly, his throat constricted. "Oh," he cried pitifully, "don't you believe me, Bee? Don't *you* love me, after all this time?"

That roused her. "Hush!" she whispered. She rose again, and her arms went around him in the old immemorial gesture of comfort. "Don't! It doesn't matter—I was wrong—of course I was wrong. I have been so upset—I didn't know what I was saying."

He clung to her, a child demanding consolation. Only Bee could see into his heart—could see all his profound and terrible love for her. Bee knew—he could trust Bee. He was weak again, and she was strong . . .

She pushed him from her tenderly.

"You'll have me crying again. We must help each other, Jack. Let me go now, dear." She paused at the kitchen door. "Go and read the letters. We'll finish dinner later on, when we're calmer."

Obediently he turned to the living room, sat down at her desk. Eleanor's picture in the oval frame was gone from it, he noticed—put away, doubtless, to be wept over in secret.

He fumbled at the letters, too tired to pull one from its envelope. He sat dully, listening to the water running in the sink. Then his glance fell idly on a half-covered sheet of paper thrust into a pigeon-hole—one of the notes she must have been writing before he came home. He pulled it out. It was for Wally—Wally, red-eyed and white-lipped at the funeral, his arm in a sling.

"*My poor boy,*" he read in Bee's pretty handwriting, "*your letter is heart-breaking. Oh, I can feel for you, so much—as if I were your next-to-mother, as I had hoped some day to be. I know better than anyone what it will mean to face life without our darling girl. You and I are cursed, Wally, with the capacity for deep feeling, as she was too; what a blessing it must be to be born without it! At least you have youth on your side. You will not believe me, my dear, but this hurt will heal for you—*"

For him, but not for us, Severn thought bitterly. Not for us older ones, ever. Eleanor with her gold hair and her trick of wrinkling her eyes in laughter and the sweet hollow at the base of her throat



will become a tender memory for him. But for us she will be a ghost, haunting the house, standing before us, the man and woman who made this lovely thing and then lost it. Only our tested oneness can overcome that haunting, only our perfect trust and comprehension, Bee's and mine. She knows that, wordless as I am, I feel more deeply than that boy can ever feel. She knows me as I know myself—more justly than I know myself . . .

His eyes fell on the unfinished paragraph at the end.

*"You must not hold that hatred in your heart for my husband. I am sorry Eleanor ever told you. It was true, but it can do no good to dwell on it now. She never forgave him really, could never feel the same toward him. But he can't help it, can he, that his emotions aren't as strong as ours? Of course he is unhappy, of course he will miss her. I feel sure he never knew how terribly he hurt her—and me. He is one of those strong, untalkative men. Why, in all our life together I doubt if he's told me a dozen times if he even cared for me! But he has been a good husband and father, very fond of us both in his own way, and I am grateful for—"*

He sat unmoving, till he heard her light footstep crossing the kitchen floor. Then he thrust the paper back and stood up. When she opened the swinging door he was in his chair at the table.

"I'll read those letters later—I couldn't—I waited—"

Language is so difficult a thing; you must form the words carefully, say them aloud, make them sound real. Had she heard him at all? He could not look at her. She was someone he had never known.

She placed the saucer of strawberries before him, sat down in her own place, pushed the cream and sugar toward him. Her stranger's voice came to him through the drumming of blood in his ears.

"The coffee will be ready in a minute, dear. . . . Jack, please excuse me for making such a fuss. We'll go to Siassett, of course. When do you want to leave? I shall have to send my blue suit to the cleaner's."

He tried to answer, but he could only nod his head, stiffly. There was a dazzling before his eyes.

# BUILDING THE CVP

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*by Paul S. Taylor*

A CREST of water started south from Shasta Reservoir on August 1, 1951, dyed green for identification. Flowing down the Sacramento River about two and a half miles an hour, it might have wasted to the sea through the Golden Gate except that it was caught as it meandered slowly through the Delta channels. Near Tracy, huge new pumps sucked it in on August 4, lifted it 197 feet upward, and poured it over the lip of the Delta-Mendota Canal. Then it flowed southward another 117 miles by gravity, along the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. At the Mendota pool opposite Fresno it reached the bed of the San Joaquin River, turned about, and flowed northward. Here a great exchange of water between rivers began. From now on, water that used to come down the San Joaquin from the mountains would do so no longer. Restrained in the foothills east of Fresno by Friant dam, it would be diverted 37 miles northward in the Madera Canal and 153 miles southward in the Friant-Kern Canal. In its place the Sacramento River water, passed through the Tracy pumps and the Delta-Mendota Canal, would reach the San Joaquin at Mendota pool.

The last of the Central Valley Project celebrations was on August 10, when water released from Friant dam two days before reached the end of the Friant-Kern Canal at Bakersfield. Although it was not the bright-green crest that started from Shasta ten days earlier, this San Joaquin water would never have arrived if the green crest had not started at Shasta. The Central Valley Project had united the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. There will be assured harvests on hundreds of thousands of acres in unending succession.

Crowds, brass bands, carnivals, jet airplanes, singing and dancing, parades and speeches marked the progress of the green crest from town to town. Notables of the state and nation were present,

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sharing the plaudits of the people at gatherings the 500-mile length of the water courses.

The festival was not unmarred, for some notes of discord were struck. These were duly reported in the press along with more harmonious items. The project had been begun in the first place because there was not enough water to go around, and now it appeared that some farmers, fearing there still would not be enough for all, were prepared to go to the courts or take to the picket line. They were trying to withhold from the project water that they believed to be their own, while others were awaiting and depending on the project to bring water to serve them. Time will settle these claims. They are mostly growing pains, water shortages to be expected at the completion after many years of the first unit of a greater plan. If fourteen years of reservoir and canal construction was bringing more water, so also fourteen years of irrigating more and more crops was multiplying the claims against whatever supplies might become available.

There were also attacks against the United States Bureau of Reclamation. It was a Republican congressman who chose this time to take up the cry of former Democratic Senator Sheridan Downey against Reclamation officials, reviving his charge that "they would rule the valley." But even the loudest critics and most reluctant supporters showed an overpowering desire to obtain a share of the credit for what had been accomplished. So at the flag-draped stands and before the microphones all were there; there seemed to be no laggards or opponents, while among the happy crowds few inquired whether those who came to bask in the extraordinary publicity had really put a shoulder to the project wheel when the going was tough, or whether anyone had slipped a stick between the spokes when he thought no one was looking. For the period of the celebration, at least, all the orators and parade marshals and distinguished personages either were, or wanted to look indispensable to the achievement of generations of planning and fourteen years of actual construction at last being celebrated.

Farsighted men have known for a long time that they ought to



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give thought to the future use of Central Valley's resources. John Bidwell came to Chico in Sacramento Valley as the first American settler one hundred ten years ago in 1841. In the 'fifties the farmers of California organized societies where men could meet and confer for the improvement of agriculture. In 1867 John Bidwell told the State Agricultural Society, "Our resources—agricultural and mineral—are literally boundless. Five millions of people can be sustained and all find enough to do within the limits of this State alone." That future of Bidwell's is already our past. The Census counts our numbers as double five millions, and those who estimate and prophesy say that our numbers will double again within a lifetime.

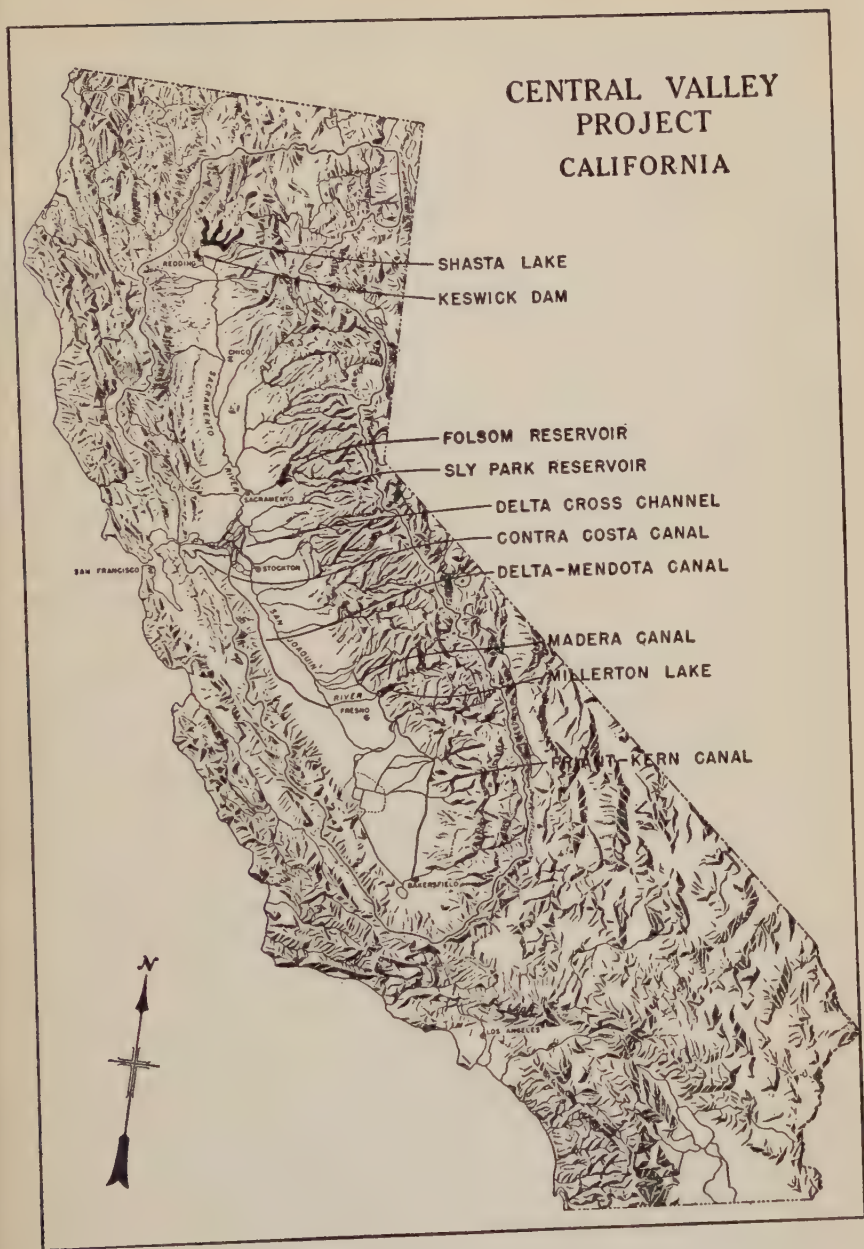
Bidwell also said in 1867: "The great central figure of the State, if I may use the term, is this grand and gorgeous valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin . . ." That statement remains as true today as it was eighty-four years ago when Bidwell uttered it. Ten months have passed since December 1950, when the Water Resources Policy Commission appointed by the President of the United States made this sober judgment on our Great Central Valley:

The Great Central Valley Basin is best considered in the light of its relations to the larger region of which it is a part. The valley dominates the State in several important ways, particularly through the amount and central location of its water resources. Further use of those resources can be planned efficiently only in terms of the potentialities, functions, and needs of California as a whole.

Considered in this manner, the use of valley water resources assumes an important, if not an indispensable place among water programs in the United States. The already large population of the State, its environmental attractiveness, its first-rank strategic location, the presence of important defense industries in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas, and the State's dominant position as a producer of mineral, forest products, fishery products, and specialized agricultural commodities combine in raising California to a commanding position in the national economy.

This language of 1950 is less poetic than that of John Bidwell in 1867, but it means the same thing. For all of the development that has taken place since 1841, the Great Central Valley of California remains the central figure in *our* future, as it was in *his*. And





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it is for this, our generation, as it was for him and for his, to say what the magnitude and quality of the future shall be.

Many people, living and dead, have given their best thoughts and efforts to bring the development of this valley to its present state. And many organizations, private and public, have taken a part. In the future, as in the past, there will be place and need for many. This is true of the making and revision of plans, of the generation and distribution of water and power, of the distribution of costs and the making of arrangements for repayment, of the conservation of fish and wildlife, of the development of recreation, of the control of ground waters, of the reconciliation of competing uses for water such as flood control, irrigation, and power generation, of the protection of the watershed and valley floor against erosion by forestry activities, by control of grazing, and by other measures. But the need for concerted activity and for unity at points where unity is absolutely essential to achievement is greater today than it has ever been before.

In the beginning it was easy—relatively—to bring water to land for irrigation. It was not necessary to make extensive arrangements with other localities using, or wanting to use water from the same source. No great reservoirs had to be built dwarfing the pyramids of Egypt. Men simply tapped the flow of streams as they left the foothills, dug canals to carry the water to their lands, and then spread the water across their fields. Sometimes the miners had dug the ditches for them already, and all they had to do was to turn the use of the ditches from gold mining to agricultural production. In each locality men could do this for themselves, in groups, or private companies, without paying much attention to anyone else. The first irrigators got their waters cheaply and easily. They saw no need at that time for public organization, for the taxpayers' help, or—except the farsighted ones among them—for integration.

This simple condition, however, could not last long. After the cheaper sources were all developed, men found that the construction costs of getting more water were going up. They also found it increasingly difficult to gain access to water sources. By the 1870's

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and 1880's the public forums of California were filled with talk of "land monopoly" and "water monopoly," as men realized that in this semiarid Central Valley it is water that makes land valuable, and that without public intervention and assistance they had little chance to get the water they wanted.

The pressure for water development was on. Men wanted the opportunity to farm and to build their towns and cities, and they were impatient of obstacles. They wrote a 320-acre land limitation into the state constitution, and provided for creation of irrigation districts as means of curbing land and water monopoly and enlarging investment in water development.

With this public help, the work went forward, but it was not enough. The cheaper sources of water soon were exhausted, and the cost of reservoir construction to bring more water was prohibitive; many of the districts exceeded their financial capacities, fell upon evil days, asked help in the 1930's from the national government in refinancing their obligations, and received it.

In the meantime, forward-looking citizens from California, Utah, Wyoming, and other Western states were already seeking sources of still more help. They undertook, beginning in the 1890's, to persuade the East and South to help finance development of the West by opening the credit of the United States Treasury. They formed a National Irrigation Congress of citizens, which met annually beginning at Salt Lake City in 1891, and within a decade had secured national legislation. On June 17, 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the National Reclamation Act, which made possible the building of Orland project years ago, and now of Shasta, Keswick, and Friant reservoirs, and all the power and pumping plants and canals that comprise the Great Central Valley Project today.

The West asked the help of the people of the United States in 1902. We have received it, not only in 1902, but in every year ever since, in growing amounts, and in generous measure. The single item of interest-free money provided under reclamation law cuts the cost to local irrigation beneficiaries in less than half, and that is but the beginning of the assistance that the people of the United States



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are giving to the development of this and other Western valleys, made possible by the terms of the National Reclamation Act.

The founding fathers of Western conservation had a conception of the quality of the society they wanted to build. Their slogans were "Save the forests! Store the floods! Reclaim the desert! Make homes on the land!" In presenting the National Reclamation Bill to the Senate in 1902, Senator Hansbrough of North Dakota said:

It is argued by some that as wealth grows larger in a few hands the opportunities of the laboring classes to secure employment are multiplied. Doubtless this contention is based upon sound reasoning, but looking a little beyond immediate benefits, it appears that the tendency under such a condition is to dwarf self-reliance in the masses and to make the mere service of opulent employers by the great army of breadwinners the fulfillment of all human ambition. I think it is the duty of the legislator to pursue a policy under which the greatest possible number of people may be provided with the means of independent employment, by which the aspirations of the individual may be encouraged and developed. To this end I give my support to this bill. . . .

Three years later a banquet was held under auspices of the Sacramento Valley Development Association, an organization of leading citizens from thirteen counties. Among the speakers was Senator Newlands of Nevada, co-author of the Reclamation Act. Speaking at Red Bluff in June 1905, he said:

Now, what national machinery have you? You have the machinery of the National Reclamation Act, intended, as your Governor has remarked, to meet the demands of the home seekers of the country. Guarded in every way against monopoly and speculation, intended to secure to every man of industry an area of land sufficient, according to the soil and the climate or productiveness, for the support of a family, and sufficient for that alone, it is also intended to break up existing land monopoly. How is that accomplished? We realized in the framing of that act that it would not be fair to apply it only to the public domain, for within reach of every governmental project lie lands in private ownership, thirsting for water to be supplied by national aid, and we felt that it was as much the duty of the National Government to supply agricultural communities that were thus imperiled as to create new agricultural communities.

And so we provided that water rights could be secured for lands in private ownership within reach of Government projects, to be guarded against



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monopoly by preventing any proprietor from securing water rights for more than 160 acres, the amount of land fixed in the bill. . . .

Here let me say that in my own opinion California has no greater curse than these large landed estates. To the Spanish or Mexican land grants was added the concentration of large areas of land secured from the Federal Government, part of the national domain, obtained either under lax laws or by evasion or maladministration of the laws. I have no word of censure to apply to the men who own these grants, or who now own these large areas of land. I only condemn the policy which made land monopoly possible on this coast and throughout the arid region.

Senator Newlands said:

I believe in this project. I believe it is the most magnificent project in the United States today. [Applause.] It involves large areas of land, a part of which you wish to cover with floods, and part of which you wish to protect from the floods, which can be accomplished only by putting in harness and controlling the Sacramento River. Besides this, you have within reach immense possibilities in water power, furnishing that which has been so essential to the development of this State, lacking as it does both water power, which will set in motion the wheels of manufacturing institutions throughout the State, and water for irrigation which will bring agriculture and its vast productions to the aid of commerce, thus securing an equal and harmonious development of the State.

Senator Dubois of Idaho, another member of the Committee on Irrigation and Reclamation, pointed out the great landmarks of past and future to the banqueters at Red Bluff.

There have been three great Acts which have built up the West [he said]. Two of these Acts came under Abraham Lincoln's Administration, when the country was in the throes of the Civil War. One was the great transcontinental lines of railway. . . . And about that same time the Homestead Act was passed, by which this country was peopled. . . . The third and the greatest bill, I think, for the West is the present National Reclamation Act.

The opportunity to use the power of falling water in this Valley of California for industry has been in men's minds for about as long as they have seen the possibilities of irrigating land. John Bidwell told the Upper Sacramento Agricultural Society on September 26, 1869, "Look at the vast—aye, unlimited water power of the Pacific Coast!" Twenty years later Edison invented the incandescent light.

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In 1893, hydroelectric energy was being generated in this valley. In 1905, General N. P. Chipman, president of the State Board of Trade, told the Sacramento Valley Development Association of the potential powers of hydroelectric energy to create and to determine the location of the manufacturing industry. He said: "When I first came to this town of Red Bluff a man was cutting timber and working it into sash and doors by water power, 65 miles from here in the mountains. Now that power is sent here over a small wire and gives us the light we have tonight and the door factory has been moved to the valley." With cheap transmission of electric power, industry can be dispersed to where it is best to have it. That is a reason why people of Central Valley should be thinking now where they want to have the industries and towns that the Central Valley Project is about to create.

In the early years of the twentieth century, farmers began to put down wells for irrigation in the southern San Joaquin Valley. They wanted to change from growing wheat to crops of higher value that needed more water. Among the earliest to tap the underground water reserves accumulated through geologic time were people next to the eastern foothills of the Sierra, around Lindsay. They were among the first, too, to find the water level lowering in their wells, and the salt content rising. These were unmistakable signs that they were draining more water than nature was storing. The people of Lindsay began to learn that hardship is the lot of the pioneer. They saw fields and orchards go dry; they saw neighbors move away and leave their houses empty. They had to ask themselves the hard question: Are we farmers making harvests in endless succession, or are we miners of the underground, destined to leave ghost towns after we have mined the water out?

Their problem a generation ago was this: They could not indefinitely go down into the earth for fresh water; they could not go up into the hills or look to the sky, for in neither was there any more water. When they went among neighbors on the Kaweah River, bought land, put down well fields, and ran the water onto Lindsay farms, the neighbors took alarm for their own water supply. Liti-

gation piled on litigation until its cost equaled that of the water in dispute. No one's future was secure. The plight of the Lindsay farmers became the plight of others.

Before the problem could be solved, it was necessary to conceive the idea how it could be done and to persuade people to do it. Among the many engineers who looked at the Central Valley, thought about its water problem, and put his hand to paper to make calculations and plans was Robert Bradford Marshall. At the climax of his career, Marshall was Chief Geographer, United States Geological Survey, Department of the Interior, and during World War I had served as colonel in the Army. Colonel Marshall was the kind of man who insisted on finding things out for himself. For eleven years or more he drove by mule team and buckboard the length and breadth of Central Valley until he knew its every feature, watercourse, stream flow, and elevation. He was a professional man, a public official, with long experience in the field, and an unswerving devotion to the interests of the people. Out of these ingredients he generated an idea. If farmers in the San Joaquin Valley could not get enough water by going down, or up, or from the hills in the east or from the neighbors to the north, south, or west, then he would get water from somewhere else.

It was Colonel Marshall's great contribution that he was able to break the bounds that held men's thoughts. His profession as geographer helped him to do it. You could know he was a geographer by his use of certain words, even if you did not know his title. To geographers, the 500-mile-long interior watershed is a unit, and properly bears a single name. He, like other geographers, called this valley the Valley of California. The rest of us thought of our valleys separately—the Sacramento, the San Joaquin, the Kings, the Kern. So long as we thought of them separately, we were stopped dead in our tracks—each locality looking down, up, east, west, north, south, or at his neighbor. That way there was no help. Colonel Marshall knew that this Great Central Valley of California is a unit that Nature had left lying inert, in two parts. He conceived the idea that unification would solve the water problem. I wonder whether it was while riding his buckboard through the dust of the



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San Joaquin, or while he stood high in the tower of the old Sacramento Post Office building gazing at the waters of the Sacramento flooding across twelve miles of the Yolo Basin, that it flashed through his mind how to put the two parts of the valley together.

When Colonel Marshall, as a private citizen, told about his plan in 1919, this is what he said:

The people of California, indifferent to the bountiful gifts that Nature has given them, sit idly by waiting for rain . . . and allowing every year millions and millions of dollars in water to pour unused into the sea. . . .

Is it indifference or unreasonable procrastination that makes the people of California neglect this wealth, or do they not know what they have or how to use it? At any rate, there in the Valley of California—in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys combined—in one immense tract, lies the largest, richest, and most fertile body of indifferently used or unused land in the United States—perhaps in the world. . . . California needs more population, and the present population needs more water. . . .

Some engineers have said that the reclamation of this Valley of California and adjacent parts of the State by one great co-ordinated project is impracticable, but I propose to show that the possibility of reclaiming it by engineering is its greatest asset. It is a large undertaking, but this is a day of large undertakings, and although it is a comprehensive, State-wide job, its immediate practicability and success depend only upon the successive building of its various parts to form a consistent whole. . . .

Marshall's idea that unification of the Central Valley watershed was the key to the water shortage of the San Joaquin Valley, and water problems of the entire Valley of California encountered apathy and resistance from both professional and lay sources. But he was persistent, and so were representatives from Lindsay and other imperiled communities. By 1921, advocates of the Marshall plan were able to persuade the Legislature to make the first appropriation for what grew into a ten-year engineering study. This study was submitted to the 1931 Legislature, and became the State Water Plan. It changed details of the Marshall plan, but rested on Marshall's principle of unification of the watershed. The State Water Plan said: "The Great Central Valley of California includes both the Sacramento and San Joaquin River basins and, in this portion of the report, is considered as one geographic division, since plans



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for the development of the water resources of the two basins and their greatest utilization are closely related."

The State Water Plan looked forward to complete development of all water resources ultimately, and again emphasized unification as the key to its achievement. It said: "The works required for solution of the state's water problem are of such great magnitude and of such far reaching scope that proper solution calls for a coordination and unification of the interests of not only the entire state, but the federal government as well, in the planning and execution of a complete program of development."

Today we stand in the middle of the development of Central Valley. Not midway in time—for although we look back one hundred ten years since John Bidwell came to Rancho Chico, we can hope to complete the structures that will conserve every drop of water that falls on the watershed within a generation—but midway in the decisions and collaborative labors that are necessary to performance of the great task that remains.

What is the physical measure of that task? It is thirty-eight major reservoirs, hundreds of miles of main canals, thousands of miles of laterals and drains, twenty-eight hydroelectric plants, supplementary fuel-electric plants, and transmission lines to carry power to markets and to hundreds of pumps essential for the control and use of the water resources of the Central Valley. These are the outlines of the Central Valley Basin report, transmitted to the Congress in 1949. This report constitutes the only present comprehensive plan for fullest possible use of the water resources of the valley. It represents the current blueprint for unified development conceived by Colonel Robert Bradford Marshall in 1919 and embodied in the State Water Plan of 1931.

The comprehensive Central Valley Basin plan of the Bureau of Reclamation will bring water to nearly two million acres now irrigated but suffering from inadequate ground-water supplies, and about four hundred thousand additional acres suffering shortages in occasional years; to three million acres not now irrigated; to municipalities and other organizations needing water, and it will

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generate, with supplementary fuel-electric plants, over eight billion kilowatt hours annually. The size of this investment will be more than twice the federal public investment in developing the Tennessee Valley. Do we want this investment to be made? Do we want the full benefit of every drop and every snowflake that falls in Central Valley Basin? Who can make the investment that is necessary? How should the benefits be shared? If we want full conservation and use of the resources of this Central Valley, how can we get it?

With reasonable unity of purpose we can have full development of Central Valley waters. Congress has brought the American River into CVP already and soon will deliberate whether the Kings River and Tulare Lake Project—seriously short of water—shall be integrated also. Reclamation law offers very liberal help from the nation's treasury for the future as in the past. If there is a better way, those who propose one should tell us just how it will be financed, and by whom.

Reclamation law represents a high conception of public purpose, well grounded on old American principles that when public resources are being distributed their benefits ought to be spread widely. The provisions for spreading the benefits of public power widely—through public transmission lines, steam plants, and preference for public agencies—are practically identical to those of the Central Valley Act adopted by the Legislature and people of California in 1933. The opponents of unity are trying to get rid of these provisions, and the 160-acre limitation.

The green crest of water released at Shasta does not mark completion of the power purposes of CVP, for the project has been barred by its opponents from building the essential transmission lines and steam plants that are part of the state's plan. Until they are constructed and the public preference provisions of the law made fully effective, the full purposes of the state act of 1933 and the National Reclamation Law to distribute the benefits of lower-cost power will remain unfulfilled.

The 160-acre water limitation applies to distribution of publicly

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developed water the same principle applied to distribution of public land by the constitution of California. It might seem that these principles embodied in state and federal law would be acceptable generally—unification and widespread distribution of power and water benefits—but this is not the fact. Central Valley large land-owners began to oppose the 160-acre limit in 1905, and some of them, notably in Tulare Lake Basin and on the Kern River, have been opposing it so vigorously since 1940 that they are willing to shatter the unity of Central Valley development. If they succeed, they will have destroyed the nation's water policy and the nation's power policy.

State enterprise to develop Central Valley power has faced incessant opposition mainly from private utility sources since the 1920's. Failing to stop public generation of power by CVP in 1933, opposition from this source has concentrated on preventing realization of the state and reclamation plans by obstructing appropriations for public transmission lines and steam plants, and opposing additional public power generation. The public can be confused easily in the welter of arguments and proposals, e.g., that the state ought to take over the project, that the Army Engineers, the state, or even irrigation districts ought to build new units in the Central Valley instead of the Bureau of Reclamation, that the federal government ought to finance governments "nearer to the people" (and presumably more democratic and less bureaucratic) without attaching strings like the public power preference clause and the 160-acre water limitation. But when these are all sorted out and analyzed, they usually boil down to two things: those who make the arguments are trying to find some plausible proposal for escaping the power and water provisions intended to prevent monopolization of the power and water benefits, and they believe that destroying the unity of Central Valley development will help them do it. Whether they have calculated the price that the people of Central Valley, the state, and the nation might have to pay if their proposals are accepted does not appear, but the people would do well to make the calculation before rushing into acceptance.



## BUILDING THE CVP

The power situation in California, like water, is acute. We have been going along for years with the devil on our coattails. All will remember 1947, when some operations of chemical plants around the Bay had to be shut down for lack of power; and 1948, when electric clocks in every home ran slow, and the entire state had to go on daylight-saving time and stay there in the winter; when more than five thousand workers—according to state investigations—had their earnings cut by one-seventh between February and March because power was short; when pulled switches stopped farmers in the middle of irrigating their crops. We do not know the number and name of all the industries that have not come to California for lack of power, or because of more favorable prices elsewhere. We do know that we have been obliged to import power into the northern California Power Supply Area 46, up to nearly 12 percent of our consumption in some years of the past decade. Now we are witnessing a rapid program of fuel-electric plants to reduce that dependence on other areas. The aim is proper, but the drain on irreplaceable fuels that this imposes is something to leave us not quite easy in our minds.

We are building a civilization in this state that we hope will be permanent. To do that we must found it upon resources that will be permanent. We have no great coal deposits; we have oil, gas, and water as sources of power. It is said that at the present rate of use, our known reserves of oil and gas will last only about twenty years. After that we will become dependent on imports, naturally at higher costs. Only hydroelectric power is permanent power.

So the sensible way to use our power resources is to husband oil and gas because they are exhaustible, and to use water to the fullest extent possible because it is ever renewing. We seem to be doing just the reverse, using up our oil and gas faster and faster to generate power, while we still let our waters fall, doing no man's work. In 1932, our installed generating capacity by hydro and by steam was in the proportions of 70 and 30; next year, by estimate, it will be 50-50, with hydro down 20 points and oil and gas up 20. In 1950, steam power production in the Northern California—



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Central Valley area, consumed fuel equivalent to 10.7 million barrels of oil. Shasta and Keswick generators in the same year produced power equivalent to the production of between 3 and 4.5 million barrels of oil, which they saved by using falling water.

We need more hydroelectric power, and it seems plain that most of it must come from river-basin, multiple-purpose, public development, in other words, mainly from the Central Valley basin development. If we accept the statement of our Governor, "No private utility has either the means, the jurisdiction, or the urge to do such a job. No private interest could integrate these functions. Only public agencies, acting in cooperation where jurisdictional lines are transcended, can do the job."

We might like to plan a future for California for just ourselves and our children, for no more people than live here now. But that is not our choice. More people have moved to California since 1940 than live in the state of Iowa. And many more are coming. Our choice is only whether the standard of living will remain high, or whether it will fall in the future for newcomers and old residents alike. We are obliged to think farther ahead than the people of perhaps any other state, and to plan better.

We must have a unified development of our water resources. None other will do. The job is too complex, too full of competing and conflicting interests, and functions that must be adjusted to delicate and ever changing balances, to permit any other way of doing the job. Administrative, engineering, financial, legal, planning, and the operating problems of today all require integration for their best solution. Integration is the best assurance of a future with full conservation and use of our water resources.

It is natural that men and interests should differ, and that their views should not always coincide. But we must remember that deep and sustained divisions can jeopardize the achievement of the greatest ends. If men are prepared to accept as the proper end of our water-resources program the maximum public benefits, widely distributed among people of the Central Valley basin and surrounding region, then may we not hope for a reasonable unity?

John Bidwell of Chico journeyed to the State Fruit Growers'

## BUILDING THE CVP

Convention in 1888. "It does me good," he told the convention, ". . . when I see the change that has taken place all over the country since I first saw it. . . . There is no doubt in my judgment, that this is to be the favored land of all lands. I think there is no mistake about it, that we have the elements to make it such, and I do hope that we will be united. . . ."

Today, sixty-three years later, the condition on the land is changed again greatly, but the need for a genuine unity among people remains the same. Not an enforced conformity that stifles and represses, but a unity by consent; a unity that resolves lesser disagreements in the greater agreement upon the high purposes of putting the water resources of this Great Valley of California to their fullest uses for the benefit of all people.

*"The true way goes over a rope which is not stretched at any great height, but just above the ground. It seems more designed to make people stumble than to be walked upon."*

—FRANZ KAFKA, *The Great Wall of China*

# SUNDAY DRIVE

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*by Brahna Trager*

CARL turned off the ignition and switched the radio on. There was no need to get out and ring the bell. Inga had said they would be watching for him. He ran his hand over the new seat cover and hummed with the music. Then they came out of the house and down the front walk together, Robert walking, as usual, rather heavily and clumsily and Inga giving the odd impression of being a little girl running along beside him. "She all but slips her little hand into his," Carl thought, watching. And she wasn't really so small either. It was the look she had of being frail and a little frightened. And the straight bangs across her forehead, and the clothes, always too big or at least too heavy for her, as if she needed to be bundled up in them. Today she was wearing some kind of thick, dark-green wool coat with a big shawl collar. It made her pale and gave her the look of an invalid in a warm wrap ready for an outing. Her face and wide, dark eyes were lost under her deep, close-fitting hat.

"Oh, it's beautiful!" she cried running up to the car and looking at it, her hands clasped childishly. A big alligator purse swung on her arm. "Why should even a purse make her look sick and odd?" Carl thought irritably.

Robert laughed. He had a deep melodious laugh, uninflected and very dull after a while. "Pretty!" he said, mimicking and emphasizing her childish manner. "Pretty! Pretty! Do you want to sit in the front with the driver?"

"Oh yes, I do. But can't we all?"

"Never mind, never mind," Robert said. "How are you, Carl?" He opened the door and helped Inga in as though he were lifting her. "Nice of you to offer us a ride when our bus is out of whack. Inga needed the air." He swung himself into the back seat with a rather heavy athletic movement as though it were a difficult thing that he was quite up to.

## SUNDAY DRIVE

Carl grinned at Inga. "How are you?" he asked. "Robert said you'd been sick."

"M-m. Not too. Just a little off." She laughed. "I wanted a ride in your new car though."

"It handles well," he said, and raced the motor suddenly. "Has lots of speed too. You always liked a fast car." He was turning out of the avenue as he spoke and he looked at her suddenly. She was staring at him as if she remembered, too. "You weren't like this then," he thought, remembering her little open car and the swift flights at night along the beach road. And her eyes, suddenly sick and frightened, seemed to answer, but he couldn't read them, for she turned away and began to roll the window down on her side.

"Better close it, Inga," Robert said from the back.

"Oh darling, I'm sorry! Are you cold?"

He laughed again. "Me? Of course not, you idiot. I just don't want to nurse you with the sniffles all week. Quick now!" She rolled it up again and sat back, her hands folded in her lap. "Buried," Carl thought, "all buried and muffled in those shapeless clothes."

"New coat?" he asked.

"Oh, yes. My birthday. The hat and purse, too. And shoes to match." She stuck her feet out, and when he looked quickly down and back at the road again he had another twinge of poignant memory. The high, arched feet and slender ankles still looked lovely and free in the graceful shoes.

"Pretty. The shoes I mean."

"Don't encourage her," Robert said. "They set me back forty bucks. She'll probably break an ankle in them."

"Robert didn't come," Inga said, "and you know me and shoes. I think the other things are beautiful too, though, don't you?"

"I like her in green," Robert said.

"I'll bet you're one of the ten husbands left in the world that shop with their wives," Carl said. "It'd drive me crazy."

"She's agreeable. God knows what she'd get if I turned her loose alone."

"Little tight jersey sweaters," Carl thought, "and swinging



## BRAHNA TRAGER

skirts. Slim things and smooth things that fit close. And light, clear color."

"Don't you ever disagree?" he asked.

"We used to sometimes," she smiled, "but he's so sure about what's right. And he is so right. I just relax now and let him tell me." She looked at her feet a little anxiously. "Except the shoes. I just can't help being senseless about shoes."

"They are pretty." His voice was a little loud, he thought.

It was warm in the car. She must be awfully warm in that heavy coat. As though in answer, her hand went to the handle of the window again and then dropped back in her lap.

"Where do you want to go?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know. Out," she said, "out into the country."

"Not too far." Robert leaned forward and put his hand on her shoulder. "An easy jaunt."

She moved her shoulder, and his quick, sidelong glance took in the slight, restless motion and the tightening of the heavy fingers. He turned the car out toward the highway.

"How's the office?" she asked.

"Fine. We miss you though."

"Ha! I believe that. Did you keep the contract with Johanson?"

"No. Lost it. To a big ad agency in New York."

"Oh no, Carl! What a crime!"

Robert had leaned back again. He began to hum. She raised her voice a little. "What happened?"

"Didn't like our layouts," he said. "Not the Inga type. Phil just doesn't have the knack."

Robert began to sing aloud now. He had a beautiful, big voice, and it filled the car. Her lips were moving. "What?" Carl said. "I didn't hear."

She bent toward him, her eyes shadowed under the impossible hat. "Phil's all right," she said. They rode along not speaking, listening to the fine, rich singing from the back seat. They were out of town now and she leaned her head against the pane and stared out. The trees were misted with pale new green. They passed an acacia standing in the full sunlight pouring light back from its

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masses of heavy blossom, and some of the delicate nostalgic scent of the spring crept into the car where the heavy voice was singing.

Carl slowed a little, "Pretty," he said, and he saw her turn her head to look and look at the wonderful color. When she turned back, her shadowed face had the invalid look of deep illness.

"Do you miss it?" he asked.

"What did you say?"

"Don't you ever miss it?"

Robert had stopped singing now, and there was only the smooth sound of the tires on the highway.

"I don't know," and then her voice suddenly was high and childish. "Oh Robert! Look! A rabbit! Look, Robbie dear!" breathlessly, "Did you see?"

"I saw, I saw." He leaned forward again. "Not so fast boy, we're not heading for a fire."

He slowed and turned into the eucalyptus grove, and the car was shaded and cool. "We're coming to the crossroads," he said. "Which way? Back toward town or out to the beach?"

"Out!" Inga said.

"Back, I think," Robert said, easily. "This is enough for one day.

She turned and smiled at him. "Let's go on, Robbie," she said. "I'm thirsty, and we can have a drink and then come back."

He laughed. "Soda pop and popcorn!" he said, "All right. I'll give you a quarter." He flipped it through the air so that it landed on the seat by her purse. She looked down at it. "I think I have some money." Her voice was low.

"She thinks!" Robert poked Carl on the shoulder. "How did she ever get home from work?" he asked. "Did you have to keep a carfare fund for her?"

"I wouldn't know," Carl said. "Maybe she took it from the lay-out budget. She was the only one who knew anything about it."

"Yes," Inga said. "I did. Know about it, I mean."

They stopped at one of the stands at Playland, and Carl let Robert go for the drinks. She leaned forward and touched the

## BRAHNA TRAGER

chrome knobs on the dashboard. "Fancy!" she said. "Full of fancy gadgets."

"You probably get just as much fun out of your car," he said.

"Oh, I do. Though I don't drive it."

"Don't you really? I can't imagine it."

"Robert never did like my driving. He thinks it's awfully erratic."

"I wouldn't have called it that exactly."

"Oh well, but then it is wonderful to just sit and leave it all to someone else."

"I guess," he said. "What's this about being sick? You were always such a powerhouse, for all your interesting pallor."

"Not sick," she said, "just tired. I get awfully tired, and then I pick things up. Colds and stuff. Nothing much though, really."

"Here's your soda pop," Robert handed her the frosty bottle. "Raspberry pop," he sang. "Raspberry pop!" But she drank only a few mouthfuls, and when he'd taken the bottles back Carl eased away from the banked cars and turned toward the beach road.

"What now?" Robert asked.

"It's just a little farther," Carl said. "This is my ride, too."

It came at them, the long smooth arc of highway with the twisted cypress turning against the sky and the flat white beach and placid open water. He started to step on the accelerator to take it fast, then suddenly slowed and stopped. "Want to drive?" he asked her. She looked at the wheel.

"Oh, come now!" Robert said.

"Yes I do."

"I'll drive her if you're tired." Robert started to get out, but Carl was already out and around the car, and Inga had slid over.

"Take it easy now," Robert said. She did at first, not as if she were uncertain though, but as if she were holding back. But then he saw the beautiful foot in the French-heeled shoe press down on the accelerator. "Hey!" Robert shouted. "Hey there! Whoa, baby!"

They were flying now, flying along the fine road, the sea a silver streak and the grotesque tree shapes leaning along the wind as they whipped by. Her hands were white on the wheel as if she held

## SUNDAY DRIVE

tight and could never let go, though she did once to push her hat back so that it fell off and rolled on the floor at Robert's feet. Now the shawl collar of her coat had fallen away from her throat. The wind whipped the bangs back clear of the broad forehead and her skin glowed, and her eyes intent on the road ahead seemed to see and see, beyond even the last curve that would bring them finally to the way back to town.

She didn't offer to change back, and no one suggested it. When she had parked the car an inch from the curb in front of the house she held on for just a second longer. Then she sighed and smiled at Carl. "Thanks," she said. "It was a fine drive."

He watched them go up the walk together. Robert was carrying the potlike hat in one hand, and he had somehow got hold of the heavy purse, too. It was swinging and banging on his arm as he walked. And Inga's heels clicked along beside him, her hair still blown and her coat open and swirling free behind her. She stood back to let Robert go in first, and he heard her clear laugh just before the big door slammed shut.



## THE AUTHORS

(Continued from page 381)

ney which took him through the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and Japan and put him in touch with writers in many parts of Asia. Professor of English and director of the Writing Center at Stanford University, he is also the author of several novels, among them *Big Rock Candy Mountain* and *Second Growth*, and of many articles and short stories. With Rockefeller Foundation funds he has recently started a service to facilitate literary exchanges between Asia and the United States.

**HIROO MUKAI** ("Letter from Tokyo" and translator of "Insects of Various Kinds") was born in London, England, but went to Japan while still a child. After graduating from the College of English Literature, Keio University, he worked as a reporter at Domei and Kyodo news agencies and later as adviser for Occupation Forces organs and facilities. In February 1951 he was one of the interpreters assigned to translate Wallace Stegner's lectures at that institution. At present he is in the United States attending the University of Pittsburgh on a SCAP scholarship. His translation of Ozaki's "Insects of Various Kinds" was made specifically for the *Spectator*.

**KAZUO OZAKI** ("Insects of Various Kinds") is known in Japan as a writer of fiction, an essayist, and a critic of contemporary literature. He was born in Kanagawa Prefecture in 1899 and received his higher edu-

cation in the Department of Japanese Literature at Waseda University, in Tokyo. He is generally recognized as the representative writer of the *Watakushi Shosetsu* (I- Short Story or Novel), of which "Insects of Various Kinds" represents an apex. At present he is living at Shimosogamura, Ashigarashita-gun, in Kanagawa, the prefecture of his birth.

**HENRY ALLEN MOE** ("The Power of Freedom") has had long and distinguished experience both as a scholar and as a foundation executive. He has lectured in law at Oxford and Columbia universities, and has served as trustee for the Rockefeller Foundation, the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, and similar institutions. Since 1924 he has filled the post of Secretary General of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

**WILLIAM SAMBROT** ("Delaying Action") describes himself as a free-lance writer. During World War II he served in the ETO, advancing from Normandy into Germany as the offensive developed. Having studied the fundamentals of creative writing at the University of California, he has become a contributor to a wide variety of magazines during the last three years.

**AGNES BRACHER** ("To R. L. S."), who speaks of herself as the wife of a college professor, insists that biographical studies are really her forte. She made her first appearance in *The Pacific Spectator* last spring with

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"Sonnet Out of Illness." After "living all over America as a child," she did undergraduate and graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, in English. Her home is Claremont, but she spends her summers in Monterey.

**ROBERT B. HEILMAN** ("Poetic and Prosaic: Program Notes on Opposite Numbers") is a professor of English at the University of Washington. In addition to his contributions to anthologies, he has written several books, including *America in English Fiction 1760-1800* and *This Great Stage: Image and Structure in King Lear*. He served as editor for *Aspects of Democracy* and various other works.

**MIRIAM ALLEN DEFORD** ("Another Day") is at once a biographer (*Psychologist Unretired — The Life Pattern of Lillian J. Martin*); reporter (the Bridges trial); writer of articles on California history; prize winner in two fields (the American Music Conference and the "Ellery Queen" contest); poet and short-story writer. This is her third appearance in *The Pacific Spectator*. Her first contribution, "The Real Dennis Kearney," appeared in 1948.

**PAUL S. TAYLOR** ("Building the CVP") has been professor of economics at the University of California, Berkeley, since 1939. Over the years he has become an authority on Mexican labor in the United States and on problems of rural rehabilitation. On numerous occasions he has served as consulting economist to various agencies, and he is now a member of the California State Board of Agriculture. He has written several books, including *The Sailors' Union of the Pacific*, *An American-Mexican Frontier* and, as co-author, *An American Exodus*.

**BRAHNA TRAGER** ("Sunday Drive") says of herself that she started to write when she was in grammar school and continued through high school and college, writing both poetry and prose. Then, during the depression, she went into medical social work and thence into medical-care administration. She is now working as the administrative officer of the Bureau of Crippled Children Services in the California State Department of Public Health. Recently she has revived her interest in writing and has taken courses in writing centers at Berkeley and in Mexico City.

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